

MINUTES OF THE
[Advisory Board on the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

Wednesday, March 25

10 a.m.

Community Court, 80 Washington Street
Hartford, CT

In attendance: Judge Patrick L. Carroll, Chair; members: Ms. Isabel Alvarez, Atty. Mark Ciarciello, Mr. Charles Epstein, Mr. Michael Hines, Atty. Deirdre McPadden, Atty. Pam Meotti, Atty. Tom Smith, Ms. Mary Sitaro, Ms. Sandra Lugo-Gines, Atty. Cindy Theran

Members absent: Atty. Stephen Ment

Also present: Ms. Heather Collins, support staff to the Board; Mr. Daniel Irace, Court Operations.

- I. Welcome: Board Chair, Chief Court Administrator Judge Patrick L. Carroll III
- II. Approval of the [Draft Minutes of the November 2014](#) meeting: The minutes were approved with one correction.
- III. Update on Report Recommendations
 - Facilities: Judge Carroll reported that the Branch has, in its bonding requests, received funds to conduct a Juror Accessibility Study. The Administrative Division's Facilities Unit is working with DAS' Department of Construction Services. Construction Services is initiating the process to select a consultant to conduct the study.
 - Training: Mr. Irace gave an update on the numbers of Branch staff who have attended the various ADA-related trainings. Two new additions, *Vicarious Trauma*, and *Popcorn & Possibilities: Dispelling Myths About Disability*, have been added. To date, some 930 Judicial Branch staff have completed at least one of five ADA trainings offered by the Branch. The newly-added *Vicarious Trauma* training will be offered until the end of the year, thanks to a grant from the State Justice Institute. Ms. Alvarez gave the Board an update on what ADA training the Court Support Services Division offers for its staff. According to Ms. Alvarez, the Division is now requiring every

employee to attend a certain number of hours of ADA-training. It is notable that all of the training currently presented by staff from the Superior Court Operations Division is open to all Judicial Branch employees, regardless of division.

- **Technology:** Ms. Lugo Gines told the Board that a survey has been completed of the quantity and condition of the Branch's auxiliary aids. As a result, a number of new pocket talkers were purchased. The Branch also purchased two new FM kits, which amplify sound for people with hearing impairments and are used most frequently by the Jury Administration. Ms. Lugo Gines also told the members that there is an increased demand for videoconferencing, which can be an appropriate accommodation in some cases. She is going to work with Ms. Sitaro to develop a concrete procedure for staff on how to make the arrangements, whom to contact, et.
- **Database:** Ms. Lugo Gines said that the current database, which does not currently capture all ADA accommodations that are granted, particularly those that are handled in the field and not reported, is in need of an update. There was discussion on the feasibility of replacing the database, possibly with a Sharepoint site where field contacts could enter in the accommodations that they make on-site.

IV. Update on Accommodation Survey Questions: Ms. Lugo Gines worked with other Superior Court Operations staff to develop a survey that will be given to people who request an accommodation. The survey seeks to assess the process for requesting an accommodation and the quality of the accommodation. The survey will be numbered, to ensure that it is not duplicated, skewing the results. The survey will be piloted in the near future in one of the larger judicial districts. The data will be used to tweak, if necessary, processes, procedures, and/or the quality of granted accommodations, including auxiliary aids.

V. Schedule Next Meeting: The Board will meet after the current legislative session ends.