



County of San Diego

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TO: Supervisor Nora Vargas, Chairwoman
Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Vice Chair
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Jim Desmond

FROM: Branden Butler
Director Office of Ethics, Compliance and Labor Standards

ACCESSIBILITY ENHANCEMENTS FISCAL YEAR 22-23 ANNUAL REPORT

On January 25, 2022 (20), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), to identify areas within County services, programs, and activities to increase communication for persons with disabilities, conduct community engagement with relevant stakeholders and community members, and to work with the County of San Diego's Committee for Persons with Disabilities to receive input on the CAO's identified areas and proposed recommendations for implementation.

In addition, the Board directed the CAO to provide an annual report to the Board that outlines any enhancements to accessibility provided under the various County departments during the year. Attachment A to this memo is the report on accessibility enhancements.

The findings from the community engagement activities were presented to the Board of Supervisors on October 11, 2022 (17).

Background

The County of San Diego (County) provides access for people with disabilities to County facilities, services, programs, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Key types of accessibility include:

- Physical Accessibility
- Program Accessibility
- Effective Communication

Physical enhancements include new construction per California building code, facility improvements, and parking lot and pedestrian rights of way renovations. Program enhancements include program modifications to provide access to people with disabilities, and programs implemented to serve people with disabilities like programs offered through Behavioral Health Services and Aging and Independence Services. Effective communication enhancements include language and ASL interpretation, document translations, and website updates.

The County of San Diego ensures compliance to the Americans with Disabilities Act through a variety of means including risk assessment, policies and procedures, training and communication, confidential reporting structure, and investigation process. Resources to ensure accessibility at the County of San Diego include the County ADA Title II Coordinator, the Accessibility Awareness Working Group, Departmental ADA Coordinators, the Compliance Awareness program, and the Board of Supervisors-appointed community advisory group, the Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

Policies and Procedures

The Board has policies for guidance with respect to accessibility.

- F-49 - Americans with Disabilities Act: Accessible Programs and Facilities Board Policy
- A-125 - Americans with Disabilities Act: Employment Provisions Board Policy

The Chief Administrative Officer Admin Manual includes policy 0010-09 Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II, Procedures and Filing of Complaints for conformance to the Americans with Disabilities Act. This policy is in the process of being updated in conjunction with the restructure of the Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Labor Standards.

County ADA Title II Coordinator & Departmental ADA Coordinators

The County ADA Title II Coordinator resides in the Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Labor Standards. The coordinator serves in the roles of ensuring compliance with the ADA as well as maintaining appropriate governance, policies, training, communication, compliance monitoring, and complaint management and issue resolution. In fiscal year 2022-23, the Office of Ethics and Compliance dedicated the Know the Code Enterprise-wide Compliance Employee Awareness Program topic for the month of October to Accessibility. In addition to the County ADA Title II Coordinator, most departments have appointed at least one employee to serve as a Departmental ADA Coordinator to receive and address any ADA and accessibility issues in the department. The County ADA Title II Coordinator periodically shares training opportunities and resources with Departmental ADA Coordinators. Additionally, a Department ADA Title II Coordinator Resource Toolkit has been created and is regularly updated for Departmental ADA Coordinators.

Accessibility Awareness Working Group

The Accessibility Awareness Working Group was convened as an advisory group of County leaders to address the January 25, 2022 (10) Board direction. The group has advised on community engagement activities, surveys, reports and presentations on topics related to accessibility to services, programs, and activities for people with disabilities.

The Accessibility Awareness Working Group was created with a core group of departmental County leaders to provide input on the activities in response to the accessibility awareness board letter. Representatives were involved in community engagement as well as identifying and implementing opportunities to increase accessibility awareness and to develop, implement, and log accessibility enhancements.

Committee for Persons with Disabilities

Article III of the Code of Administrative Ordinances states that the Committee for Persons with Disabilities (CPD), a Board of Supervisors-appointed community advisory group, exists to assure the self-determination of persons with disabilities; provide persons with disabilities with the resources and educational services necessary to enable them to achieve their fullest potential; and to provide them with an equal opportunity to participate fully in the social and economic benefits of our society. The CPD has designated its focus areas as public safety, housing, and program access.

The existence of the CPD has been promoted to departments, and departments are encouraged to provide presentations on their programs to the committee. The CPD has provided input to the District Attorney, Sheriff's department, and Citizen's Law Enforcement Review Board on various programs. In addition, the CPD contributed to the Sheriff's Department decision to establish an Americans with Disabilities Act Unit (ADA Unit).

In fiscal year 2022-23, the CPD elected a new chair and a new vice-chair and filled two vacancies with re-appointments. The CPD is currently seeking to fill three vacancies (one each in Districts 3, 4, and 5) resulting from a resignation and term expirations.

Departmental Accessibility Enhancements

As directed by the Board, an annual report listing accessibility enhancements will be provided at the end of each fiscal year. This first annual report will serve as a baseline for facilities, services, programs, activities and accommodations that are in place to provide access to people with disabilities. During fiscal year 2022-23, twenty-nine (29) departments in each of the four management groups provided input on nearly 200 initiatives and program enhancements that increase accessibility to County of San Diego facilities, services, programs, and activities.

The report on accessibility enhancements is referenced in this board memo in **Attachment A**.

If you have questions, please contact Todd Hood, Chief Privacy Officer and County ADA Title II Coordinator at todd.hood@sdcounty.ca.gov or Branden Butler, Director Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Labor Standards Enforcement at branden.butler@sdcounty.ca.gov

Respectfully,



Branden Butler
Director, Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Labor
Standards

ATTACHMENT(S)

ATTACHMENT A – County of San Diego – Annual Report of Accessibility Enhancements
(Fiscal Year 22-23)

- c: Helen N. Robbins-Meyer, Interim Chief Administrative Officer
Michael Vu, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Claudia Silva, County Counsel
Ebony N. Shelton, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/Chief Financial Officer
Sarah Aghassi, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Land Use and Environment Group
Holly Porter, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Public Safety Group
Dr. Eric McDonald, Interim Agency Director/Chief Medical Officer
Kelly Martinez, San Diego County Sheriff