

CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Teleconference Meeting Minutes April 9, 2025

1. Call to Order

Chair Dr. Luciana Profaca welcomed everyone and called the meeting of the Education and Outreach (E&O) Committee of the California Commission on Disability Access (CCDA) to order at approximately 1:30 p.m. The meeting was on Zoom, via teleconference, and held at the CCDA Headquarters, 400 R Street, Suite 312, Sacramento, California 95811.

Staff Member Baker-Strother reviewed the meeting protocols.

Roll Call

Staff Member Baker-Strother called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Committee Members Present:

Dr. Luciana Profaca, Committee Chair

Rob Bonta, Attorney General, by Deputy Attorney General Ben Conway

Ashley Leon-Vazquez

Hector Ramirez

Michelle Davis

Zeenat Hassan

Arnie Lerner

*All Committee Members participated remotely

Committee Member Absent:

Stephen Simon

Staff Present:

April Dawson Rawlings, Executive Director

Abigail Ridge, Operations Manager

Presley Baker-Strother, Marketing and Outreach Analyst

Stephanie Groce, Data and Research Analyst

Sabina Nakarmi, Program Technician

Also Present:

No members of the public addressed the Committee.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (July 24, 2024) – Action

Motion: Committee Member Conway moved to approve the July 24, 2024, California Commission on Disability Access Education and Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. Committee Member Ramirez seconded. There was no public comment on the motion. Motion carried 6 yes, 0 no, and 1 abstain, per roll call vote as follows:

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The following Committee Members voted “Yes”: Committee Members Conway, Hassan, Leon-Vazquez, Lerner, and Ramirez, and Chair Dr. Profaca.

The following Committee Member abstained: Committee Member Davis.

3. Comments from the Public on Issues Not on this Agenda – Discussion

No members of the public addressed the Committee.

4. Disability Access and Education Revolving Fund – Update and Discussion

a. Accessibility Compliance Fund

Chair Dr. Profaca stated the Committee will hear an update on the Disability Access and Education Revolving (DAER) Fund and the DAER Quick Reference Guide. She asked staff to present this agenda item.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated staff has been working in partnership with the Division of the State Architect (DSA) for a couple of years to get the word out about the uses of the DAER Fund/Accessibility Compliance Fund and how it can help businesses locally to learn about ADA compliance and for the training and retention of Certified Access Specialists (CASps).

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated the DAER Fund Quick Reference Guide is available on the website as a one-pager or as a PDF. The Guide is currently being translated into multiple languages.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated the CCDA received over 100 responses to a survey sent out to all municipalities in California. The survey asked about their understanding of the Fund and what their municipality is doing with the Fund. The responses will help in developing outreach efforts to those municipalities.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated the CCDA is planning to host webinars on the DAER Fund. Also, the Education and Outreach Analyst will meet with municipalities in partnership with the DSA. She stated she has been asked to serve on a panel at an ADA conference in Bakersfield on July 24th and Ventura County in September where she will be speaking about the DAER Fund.

Discussion

Chair Dr. Profaca asked how Committee Members could advise small business owners about the process of accessing some of these funds.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated every municipality is different. Staff receives public inquiry and directs them to the building department or gives a warm handoff to the right contact in their municipality. Part of the reason that staff is doing municipal outreach is to create a contact list so the CCDA can be the link to find the right contact for businesses, whether for the DAER Fund or other funds, to help them achieve access compliance.

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Commissioner Ramirez asked if there is a distinction in how the Fund is utilized between county and city municipalities.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated it depends on how the business license fees are collected. Sometimes the city, the county, or a combination of both collect the fees.

Commissioner Ramirez asked if there is a unifying factor that ensures that it is being done in an equitable way.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated the main purpose of the Fund is for the training and retention of CASps. Survey responses indicated that most everyone is utilizing the Fund for that main purpose. A law was passed two years ago that allows municipalities to choose to set up accessibility programs with leftover funds after they complete the main purpose of the Fund.

Committee Member Ramirez asked about the number of CASps in Los Angeles County.

Committee Member Davis stated the CASp database shows that there are 251 CASps that will currently do inspections in Los Angeles County.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. CCDA Strategic Plan – Update and Discussion

a. Consultant Update

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated the CCDA's current five-year strategic plan expired on December 31, 2024. The bidding process has closed. The new consultant will soon be announced.

Discussion

Committee Members asked clarifying questions on the strategic plan process.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. CCDA Webinars – Update and Discussion

a. Pacific ADA Webinar Collaboration 2025

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated staff continues to work with the Pacific ADA Center on the 2025 Webinar Collaboration Series. A lunch-and-learn webinar will be held on Tuesday, April 22nd, on the Business Owners and Operators Guide to Accessible Parking. The next webinar will be in October on Business Resiliency.

Discussion

Committee Members asked clarifying questions about the webinar.

Public Comment

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There was no public comment.

7. CCDA Listening Forums – Update and Discussion

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated, at the March full Commission meeting, the Commission partnered with the Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities, which is the local Center for Independent Living for San Mateo County, the San Mateo Area Chamber of Commerce, and the DSA to convene a Listening Forum that was held after the Commission meeting in the Aspen Room of the Westin San Francisco Airport Hotel. The theme of the Listening Forum was Disability Compliance at Places of Business to Improve Access for All. The next forum will be held in Sacramento, tentatively on August 31st. Details are forthcoming.

Discussion

Commissioner Ramirez stated they liked the industry-wide focus of the Listening Forum. They stated the restaurants and hotels in Sacramento need to work to ensure that they are accessible to people visiting the capital. Having a Listening Forum by the state capital is a good way to show what the state capital is doing. They shared their experience of struggling with inaccessible features and locations in the capitol building.

Commissioner Ramirez stated the Listening Session was interesting, particularly the challenge with the back door leading from the parking lot. No one is aware of the accessibility challenges until they become a barrier. There was good discussion at the Listening Forum but there is still more that needs to be done. People who are directly impacted by inaccessibility know more about it than anyone else. That conversation provided a great learning opportunity.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Social Media Outreach – Update and Discussion

a. Video Project

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings shared updates to the CCDA Facebook and YouTube Channels.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated the first video in the ten-video Accessibility Myth-Busters series has been created with the DGS Office of Public Affairs on dispelling accessibility myths. One of the featured actors was Commissioner Lillibridge. The video is currently in post-production.

Executive Director Dawson Rawlings stated there was a consensus at the last full Commission meeting to utilize the High-Frequency Litigant Fund for additional video projects.

There were no questions from Committee Members and no public comment.

9. Future Agenda Items – Discussion

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Chair Dr. Profaca asked Committee Members for suggestions for the next agenda. No future agenda items were offered.

10. Adjourn

Chair Dr. Profaca thanked everyone for their participation and stated the next E&O Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 23rd, at a location to be announced. She asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Ramirez moved to adjourn the April 9, 2025, California Commission on Disability Access Education and Outreach Committee meeting. Commissioner Conway seconded. Motion carried 7 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per roll call vote as follows:

The following Committee Members voted "Yes": Committee Members Davis, Conway, Hassan, Leon-Vazquez, Lerner, and Ramirez, and Chair Dr. Profaca.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.