

ACCESS FORWARD: CCDA SPRING NEWSLETTER

CCDA Update:

As of March 2026, the California Commission on Disability Access (CCDA) is fully staffed with appointed commissioners and support personnel, strengthening the commission's ability to advance its mission and serve stakeholders throughout California. The spring months have been marked by significant growth and engagement. CCDA is proud to celebrate several outreach successes from March through May 2026. The commission's social media presence continues to expand, with Facebook followers increasing from 179 in 2025 to 274 today. The most significant growth occurred between February and March 2026, reflecting increased engagement and interest in CCDA's work. Through a consistent posting schedule, CCDA has continued to connect with stakeholders and share important information and resources. In April 2026, CCDA hosted its first Lunch and Learn Webinar Series of the year in collaboration with the Pacific ADA Center. The webinar focused on accessibility trends across Los Angeles County from 2019–2025 and attracted more than 50 registrants. Earlier in March, CCDA launched its 2026 Commission to Community Listening Forum series with a successful event in Kern County, providing an opportunity for community members to share their experiences, concerns, and recommendations directly with CCDA. CCDA also convened two stakeholder summits, one with members of the disability community and another with representatives from the business community, to help inform the development of the commission's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan. These discussions generated valuable insights that will help guide the commission's priorities and future initiatives. Meanwhile, CCDA's meeting season is now in full swing. By the end of May 2026, all commission subcommittees will have convened and continued their work to advance commissioner priorities, support ongoing initiatives, and address key accessibility issues across California. Looking ahead, June will bring both a full commission meeting and the second Commission to Community Listening Forum of the year in San Francisco. The program will feature a panel discussion on disability access and provide updates on the San Francisco Office on Disability and Accessibility's "Beyond the Front Door" initiative and other local accessibility efforts. In July, CCDA will continue its outreach and partnership efforts by hosting stakeholder

events and participating in partner organization activities throughout the state. The second Lunch and Learn Webinar Series of 2026, presented in collaboration with the Pacific ADA Center, will take place in July. CCDA will also participate in the 2026 Kern County ADA Conference. As we move into the summer months, CCDA remains committed to building on this momentum through collaboration, outreach, and community engagement. The commission looks forward to concluding the 2026 meeting season with its October full commission meeting in Los Angeles and continuing its work to advance accessibility and inclusion for all Californians.

Upcoming Public Events

Executive Committee | June 3, 2026 | 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Full Commission | June 24, 2026 | 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Commission to Community (City of San Francisco) | June 24, 2026 | 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

CCDA Lunch and Learn Webinar | July 29, 2026 | 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.

Education and Outreach Committee | July 22, 2026 | 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Legislative Committee | August 19, 2026 | 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Content:

CCDA Update, Upcoming Public meetings | 1

Commissioners in the Community, Commissioner Highlights | 2

CCDA Projects | 3

National and Community Disability Observances | 4 - 7

Disability Access and Community Resources | 8

Resources for Promoting Business Access | 9

Commissioners in the Community

Commissioner Drake Dillard served as moderator and panelist for CCDA's first Community Listening Forum of 2026 in Kern County. The event brought together advocates, professionals, and community stakeholders from across the region to discuss accessibility challenges, share resources, and explore opportunities to advance access throughout Kern County. The event included a presentation from the State Architect and CCDA Commissioner Ida Clair, FAIA, who also participated in a panel discussion alongside Jimmie Soto, executive director of the Independent Living Center of Kern County.

Together, the panelists shared insights on accessibility, community engagement, and opportunities to improve access through the region. The event marked the kickoff of the 2026 CCDA Commission to Community Listening Forum series, setting the stage for continued conversation and community partnerships throughout the year!

Commissioner Highlights

Commissioner Dr. Catherine Campisi serves on CCDA representing the disability community. Appointed by the California State Senate, her current term runs from April 10, 2025, through January 1, 2027. A distinguished public servant, educator, and advocate, Commissioner Dr. Campisi has dedicated her career to advancing accessibility, equity, and opportunities for people with disabilities. Commissioner Dr. Campisi previously served for seven years as director of the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), building on earlier leadership roles within the department's executive leadership team. Throughout her tenure, Commissioner Dr. Campisi helped shape policies and programs that expanded access and strengthened services for Californians with disabilities. Commissioner Dr. Campisi's leadership extends well beyond state government. She has held prominent roles in national and statewide organizations, including the Association on Higher Education and Disability, the California Association on Postsecondary Education and Disability, and the Association of California State Employees with Disabilities, where she currently serves as a board member. Retirement from DOR has not slowed her commitment to public service. Commissioner Dr. Campisi continues to consult on accessibility in higher education, volunteers with the Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities, and shares her expertise as a guest instructor, including teaching graduate-level courses on counseling persons with disabilities at California State University, Sacramento. Whether mentoring future leaders, advising institutions on accessibility, or advocating for systems change, Commissioner Dr. Campisi remains deeply committed to empowering individuals and strengthening communities. Commissioner Dr. Campisi's experience, leadership, and passion for advancing disability rights make her an invaluable member of CCDA and a powerful voice for California's disability community.

CCDA Projects

Commission to Community Listening Forum Events 2026

CCDA hosted its first Commission to Community Listening Forum event in Kern County this past March. This gathering brought together local disability organizations, Certified Access Specialists (CASps), state-level officials and residents with disabilities. By listening directly to community voices, CCDA strengthened its mission to advance disability access while focusing on lived experiences. CCDA is scheduled to host events in the City of San Francisco and Los Angeles County and more. Stay tuned for updates!

Save the Date: CCDA 2026 Lunch and Learn Webinar Series in collaboration with Pacific ADA Center

In 2026, CCDA will continue its collaboration with the Pacific ADA Center for the third consecutive year by hosting a three-part webinar series. Each session will focus on regions identified in CCDA's aggregated data as trending in construction-related accessibility and web accessibility violations. The webinars will spotlight each region, examine the most common issues observed in the region, and place those findings in the context of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

CCDA 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan Development

CCDA is committed to developing a comprehensive Five-Year Strategic Plan to guide its priorities and initiatives. This plan will articulate the organization's vision and mission, ensuring a clear direction for the next five years (2025 – 2030). CCDA is in the process of finalizing its draft and aims to have it complete by the end of the 2026 meeting cycle.

CASp Brochure Translations

CCDA collaborated with the Division of the State Architect (DSA) to translate three existing CASp informational brochures into 17 different languages. This effort aims to expand public awareness of the Certified Access Specialist Program and ensure that businesses, property owners, and community members with diverse language needs have access to accurate, easy-to-understand information about accessibility compliance.

The translated brochures provide an overview of the CASp program, explain the benefits of obtaining a CASp inspection, and help stakeholders understand how proactive accessibility planning can reduce legal exposure and improve access for individuals with

disabilities. By making these materials available in multiple languages, CCDA and DSA continue their commitment to promoting statewide accessibility, removing barriers to information, and supporting inclusive communication with California's multilingual communities.

National and Community Disability Awareness Observances

March:

International Wheelchair Day

International Wheelchair Day, observed on March 1, recognizes the millions of individuals worldwide who use wheelchairs and acknowledges the independence, mobility, and opportunity these devices provide. Wheelchairs do more than support transportation, they facilitate participation in everyday life.

Development Disabilities Awareness Month

Developmental Disability Awareness Month highlights the talents, strengths, and contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities. It is also an opportunity to reinforce the importance of accessibility and inclusive practices in places of public accommodation.

Brain Injury Awareness Month

International Wheelchair Day, observed on March 1, recognizes the millions of individuals worldwide who use wheelchairs and acknowledges the independence, mobility, and opportunity these devices provide. Wheelchairs do more than support transportation, they facilitate participation in everyday life.

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month and Week

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month and Week, observed the week of March 7-14, highlights the impact of MS and the importance of accessible, supportive environments. MS can affect mobility, balance, vision, fatigue levels, cognition, and sensory processing.

Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month and Day

March 25, 2026 marks the 20th anniversary of National Cerebral Palsy (CP) Awareness Day as well as CP Awareness Month in the United States. CP is the most common motor disability worldwide, including among more than 1 million people in the United States. CP can affect movement, coordination, balance, muscle tone, speech

and fine motor skills. Because CP affects individuals differently, accessibility needs vary.

World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day, March 21, celebrates people with Down syndrome and raises awareness about the importance of inclusive, accessible communities. Ensuring businesses and public spaces are welcoming and accessible helps ensure people with Down syndrome, and all people with disabilities, have equitable access to services, opportunities, and community life.

Purple Day for Epilepsy

Purple Day is recognized every year on March 26 and is an international day dedicated to raising awareness about epilepsy. Its purpose is to reduce stigma, challenge misconceptions, and support people with epilepsy. Approximately 3 million people in the United States and about 50 million people worldwide have epilepsy.

World Bipolar Day

World Bipolar Day, March 30, raises awareness of the experiences of people with bipolar disorder and highlights that many disabilities are not immediately visible. Fostering understanding and reducing stigma are essential steps toward building inclusive communities.

April:

World Autism Day and Month

April is World Autism Awareness Month, and April 2 is Autism Awareness Day. This observance highlights the many ways people with autism engage with and experience their communities. Increasing awareness of nonvisible disabilities plays an important role in building environments grounded in respect and inclusion. For businesses, considering sensory, communication, and cognitive access is an important part of meeting accessibility responsibilities in public accommodations.

Paralyzed Veterans Across America Awareness Month

Paralyzed Veterans Across America Awareness Month acknowledges the service and contributions of veterans with paralysis. It also underscores the role accessibility plays in ensuring public spaces are usable and welcome to all.

Limb Loss and Limb Difference Awareness Month

Limb Loss and Limb Difference Awareness Month brings attention to people with limb loss or limb differences and the varied ways they navigate daily life. It is an opportunity to consider how environments and services can better reflect a wide range of mobility needs.

Parkinson's Awareness Day and Month

April is Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month, with April 11 recognized as Parkinson's Disease Awareness Day. In the United States alone, nearly 1 million people are part of the Parkinson's community. While there is currently no cure, ongoing research and advocacy continue to expand treatment options and support autonomy and quality of life. The red tulip has served as the official symbol of Parkinson's awareness since 2005, representing hope and continued progress.

May:

Older Americans Awareness Month

May is Older Americans Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the many contributions of older adults in our communities. As people age, they may experience changes in mobility, vision, hearing, cognition, or mental health. These are a natural part of life, and some individuals may identify as having a disability. Disability is a normal part of the human experience and reflects the diverse ways people interact with the world, not a limitation on a person's value or potential. Accessibility and inclusion matter at every stage of life. In fact, one in four adults in the U.S. has a disability, and that number increases with age.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month

May is Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Awareness Month, also commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS is a neurodegenerative condition that may affect muscle strength, speech, swallowing, and mobility. While there is currently no known cure, May is an opportunity to recognize the strength and experiences of people with ALS.

National Stroke Awareness Month

May is National Stroke Awareness Month. Recognizing the warning signs of a stroke quickly can help ensure people experiencing a stroke receive timely medical care. It is recommended to think of the acronym "FAST" to help identify potential symptoms. "F" stands for

face dropping, "A" for arm weakness, "S" for speech difficulty, and "T" for time to call 911.

Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month is observed every May and has been recognized since 1949. Mental health conditions are medical conditions that can affect a person's emotions, thinking, or behavior and may impact daily life.

Arthritis Awareness Month

May marks Arthritis Awareness Month, and this year, Green Heart Fridays highlight support and awareness for people with arthritis. This condition affects nearly 60 million people in the United States. As one of the leading causes of disability, impacting about one in four adults, it is important to recognize the need for access and accommodations.

Global Accessibility Awareness Day

Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) is observed annually on the third Thursday of May to promote awareness of digital accessibility. Beginning in 2012, GAAD focuses the importance of creating digital experiences that are accessible to all users, including people with disabilities.

As conversations around accessibility continue to evolve, digital access remains an important topic across both public and private sectors. In 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice published a Title II ADA rule addressing accessibility requirements for state and local government digital services and referenced Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA standards.

Disability Access and Community Resources

Awareness Kern County ADA Conference 2026

The Independent Living Center of Kern County (ILCKC) is celebrating the 35th anniversary of the signing of the ADA by hosting a conference on Thursday, July 30 through Friday, July 31 at the Bakersfield Marriott, 801 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301. ILCKC invites you to attend the Kern County ADA Conference 2026, a premier event dedicated to promoting accessibility, inclusion and advocacy for individuals with disabilities within our communities. If you have any questions, you can call ILCKC at (661) 325-1063, video call at (661) 369-8966 or email them at info@ilcofkerncounty.org.

Kern County ADA Conference 2026 Registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1980205274281>

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division

At the federal level, individuals are able to file an ADA complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division if they believe that they or someone else was discriminated against based on a disability. The ADA complaint can be filed against a state government or local government and a private business that is a place of public accommodation.

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division: Filing an ADA Complaint:

www.ada.gov/file-a-complaint/

Save the Date: 3rd Annual CA Government and Disability Summit in Ventura County 2026

Ventura County invites you to attend the 3rd Annual Government and Disability Summit, taking place from Tuesday, September 1 to Thursday, September 3. Centered on the theme "Access that Moves Us," the event will unite representatives from local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and businesses throughout California. This summit presents a valuable opportunity to connect with professionals and organizations dedicated to promoting accessibility and inclusion statewide. Attendees can look forward to sessions featuring innovative solutions to access barriers and collaborative discussions with a diverse range of stakeholders, all aimed at fostering a more inclusive California. In addition, leading experts will share insights on accessibility, policy development, and best practices.

3rd Annual CA Government and Disability Summit Registration:

<https://cagovdisabilitysummit.regfox.com/2026-ca-government-and-disability-summit>

Resources for Promoting Disability Access

CASp Property Inspection

A CASp has the expertise to identify which accessibility standards apply to a business/property based on its age and history of renovations. While licensed design professionals, such as architects or engineers, can assess a facility for accessibility, only a CASp can offer services that grant a business "qualified defendant" status in the event of a construction-related accessibility lawsuit. Taking the

proactive step of hiring a CAsp can reduce a business or property owner's potential liability and offer important legal protections if an accessibility claim arises.

[Division of the State Architect CAsp:](#)

Program <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/CCDA/Resources/Page-Content/California-Commission-on-Disability-Access-Resources-List-Folder/Division-of-State-Architects-CAsp-Program>

Website Accessibility Resources

Ensuring that websites are accessible is essential for California businesses seeking to serve individuals with disabilities. Meeting the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines involves considerations such as providing text alternatives, enabling full keyboard navigation, and designing pages that accommodate diverse user needs. Ongoing testing and updates are important, as is understanding legal obligations like those outlined in the ADA. Improving accessibility not only supports compliance but also enhances overall user experience, helping businesses reach a broader audience and demonstrate their commitment to inclusion. Business owners and operators can explore various standards and testing methods to identify and address accessibility issues. Ultimately, accessible websites benefit all users by improving engagement, satisfaction, and contributing to a more inclusive online environment.

[Department of Rehabilitation:](#)

<https://dor.ca.gov/Home/WebAccessibilityToolkit> California

[Department of Technology:](#)

<https://www.cdt.ca.gov/accessibility/>

CCDA Lunch and Learn Webinar Series in Collaboration with Pacific ADA Center

Join CCDA for the second webinar of the 2026 series as we explore accessibility trends observed in Santa Clara County from 2019-2025 on Wednesday, July 29, from 12–1 p.m. via Zoom.

This session will focus on commonly reported barriers related to access to goods, support, services, and equipment, as well as toilet, lavatory, and bathing facilities. Frequently observed access barriers include noncompliant surface heights for counters, tables, and bars; lack of accessible sales and service counters; insufficient toe and knee clearance; and merchandise displays that reduce accessible paths of travel to less than 36 inches wide.

[2026 CCDA Lunch and Learn Webinar Registration:](#)

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/uvj-vnjUQkeFKCPY_0Dq7g#/registration

CCDA Contact Information

Stay up to date with CCDA on our Facebook [@CaliforniaCommissionOnDisabilityAccess](#) and subscribe to our YouTube Channel [@AccessCCDA](#)

Want to get involved with CCDA? Attend our public meetings and events to learn about our latest activities. To view the latest event calendar, visit our website:

[@CaliforniaCommissionOnDisabilityAccess](#)

California Commission on Disability Access | 400 R Street, Suite 310, Sacramento, CA 95811

(916) 319-9974 | ccda@dgs.ca.gov | www.dgs.ca.gov/CCDA