

# A c c e s s F o r w a r d

## CCDA Winter Newsletter

### CCDA Update:

CCDA is proud to have closed out 2025 with numerous accomplishments as we continued our commitment to outreach and engagement across California, expanding impact both in the community and online. Through a strong and consistent social media presence, CCDA connected with a broader audience while building in-person relationships throughout the state. By attending community events, conferences, and hosting resource tables, CCDA brought its mission directly to the public - promoting engagement and raising awareness at the local level. This balanced approach to physical and digital outreach has laid the foundation for increased stakeholder involvement. CCDA will continue to build on this momentum in 2026 by creating new opportunities to connect, share resources, and advance accessibility for all Californians.

In 2025, CCDA continued the CCDA Lunch & Learn Webinar Series, developed in collaboration with the Pacific ADA Center for the second consecutive year. The 2025 CCDA Lunch and Learn Webinar Series featured two sessions aimed at providing stakeholders with valuable information and resources to promote accessibility across California. The first session of the 2025 CCDA Lunch & Learn Webinar Series focused on accessible parking and spotlighted CCDA's Accessible Parking Toolkit for Business Owners and Operators. The second webinar session centered on emergency preparedness, offering resources on how businesses can integrate accessibility into their business continuity plans and adapt during emergencies while continuing to meet accessibility obligations. In total, more than 400 stakeholders registered for the 2025 CCDA Lunch & Learn Webinar series.

CCDA also participated in events across California. Some of these online events include the Pacific ADA Center's Virtual 2025 Conference and a collaborative webinar with the California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED) focused on helping businesses improve disability access and expand their customer base.

As we begin 2026, CCDA looks forward to continuing to expand its outreach efforts through both community and online events, enhanced social media engagements, educational resources and more!



- Upcoming Public Events:**
- Executive Committee**  
March 4, 2026  
1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.
- Full Commission**  
March 25, 2026  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Commission to Community (Kern County)**  
March 26, 2026  
10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- Education and Outreach Committee**  
April 8, 2026  
1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.
- CCDA Lunch and Learn Webinar**  
April, 14, 2026  
12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
- Legislative Committee**  
April 29, 2026  
10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

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# Commissioners in the Community



## Commission Chair Chris Downey

In July 2025, in recognition of the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), CCDA Commission Chair Christopher Downey served as a panelist at the 2025 Kern County ADA Conference, hosted by the Independent Living Center of Kern County in Bakersfield, California. The conference commemorated the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ADA and brought together advocates, professionals and stakeholders for a day of learning, collaboration and celebration.

As part of the program, Commission Chair Downey participated in a panel discussion on “Kiosk Accessibility” alongside a representative from Division of the State Architect (DSA). With over 250 attendees, the conference provided a forum to share resources, engage in dialogue, strengthen collaboration, and promote accessibility statewide.

## CCDA Projects



### Kern County ADA Conference 2025

CCDA attended and hosted an all-day resource table to connect with stakeholders at the Kern County ADA Conference celebrating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the ADA. CCDA Commission Chair Chris Downey participated in a panel discussion on “Kiosk Accessibility” and CCDA Executive Director April Dawson Rawlings joined a panel discussion alongside local officials, attorneys, and representatives from Division of the State Architect (DSA) on the “Accessibility Compliance Fund/Disability Access and Education Revolving Fund (DAERF).”



### Commission to Community Listening Forum Events

Throughout 2025, CCDA hosted Commission to Community Listening Forum events in Sacramento and San Mateo county, creating spaces for open dialogue, shared learning, and collaboration. These gatherings brought together local disability organizations, chambers of commerce, Certified Access Specialists (CASp), 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. In 2026, CCDA is scheduled to host events in Kern County, Monterey County, Los Angeles County and more. Stay tuned for updates!



### Lunch and Learn Webinar 2026 Series: Save the Date

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, place those findings in the context of ADA requirements and then put that into the context of the ADA.



### Stakeholder Summit 2026: Sharing Perspectives to Inform CCDA's Strategic Plan

In February, CCDA hosted two virtual stakeholder summits as part of its strategic planning process. The Business Community Summit gathered input on accessibility, compliance and partnership, while the Disability Community Summit focused on experiences and priorities related to access, inclusion and equity. Feedback from both listening sessions will help shape CCDA's five-year Strategic Plan, to be completed in 2026 to guide the Commission's work through 2030.

# National and Community Disability Awareness Observances

## December:

### International Day of Persons with Disabilities

December 3 is International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This day, created by the United Nations, focuses on the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities. It reminds us how important accessibility and equal opportunities are in all parts of life—like school, work and health care. It's also a time to challenge stereotypes, remove barriers, and build communities where everyone can succeed. Let's work together to create a more inclusive and fair society for all.

## January:

### Braille Literacy Month

January is recognized as Braille Literacy Month, celebrating the invention of the braille system and promoting awareness of braille literacy. Braille is a system of raised dots that people can feel with their fingers. It uses patterns of six dots to represent letters, numbers, and even symbols for music, math and science. Braille was invented in the 1800s by Louis Braille in France. It allows people who are blind and visually disabled to read the same books and magazines as those printed in regular text.

### Glaucoma Awareness Month

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month. Glaucoma is one of the main causes of permanent blindness and often has no early warning signs. The best way to protect your vision is through regular eye exams. If you're over 60, have a family history of glaucoma, or are in a higher-risk group, schedule an eye exam soon. Early detection can help prevent vision loss and keep your eyes healthy for years to come.

### Ed Roberts Day

January 23 honors Ed Roberts, a leader in the disability rights movement. He was the first wheelchair-using student at UC Berkeley and helped start the first Center for Independent Living, giving people with disabilities more freedom and choices. His work led to important laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ed Roberts Day reminds us to support inclusion and equal opportunities for everyone.

## February:

### Low Vision Awareness Month

February is Low Vision Awareness Month. Low vision means having trouble seeing even with glasses, contacts, medicine or surgery. Millions of people live with low vision caused by conditions like macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic eye disease and cataracts. Special tools and training can help people use the vision they have and stay independent. This month, let's remind everyone to get regular eye exams and support resources that help people with low vision keep doing the things they enjoy.

# Disability Access and Community Resources

## Pacific ADA Center 2026 Virtual Conference

Beyond Compliance:  
Equity, Access, and the ADA

March 10 – 11, 2026



## Pacific ADA Center

The Pacific ADA Center is a regional resource that helps individuals, businesses, governments, nonprofits and employers understand the ADA and other federal disability rights laws. They provide free, confidential technical assistance, training sessions, and guidance on topics like accessibility standards, employment accommodations, service animals, and effective communication. Additionally, they offer publications, fact sheets, webinars and tools to support ADA coordinators and organizations in creating inclusive environments.

Join Pacific ADA Center on March 10–11, 2026 (via Zoom) for the Pacific ADA Center’s virtual conference—packed with ADA coordinator, general ADA, and specialty tracks for emergency management, higher ed, employers/HR, business owners and many sessions offer ADA coordinator training certification program and certified access specialist (CASp).

Join sessions on key topics like digital accessibility, universal design in recreation and facilities, accessible event and space design, inclusive communications, the ADA and reasonable modifications.

[Conference Attendee Registration Link](#)



## California Civil Rights Department

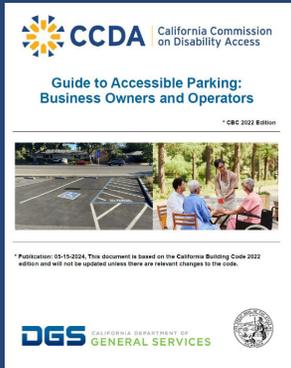
The California Civil Rights Department (CRD), formerly the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, is committed to protecting Californians from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, businesses, state-funded programs, and bias-motivated violence. CRD offers free webinars, workshops and public forums to educate communities on civil rights and provides resources such as multilingual publications, posters, and training opportunities for employers, housing providers and advocates. Stay informed by subscribing to updates, exploring upcoming events, and accessing tools to file complaints or request accommodations. Together, we can promote equity, justice, and inclusion across California. Learn more at [calcivilrights.ca.gov](http://calcivilrights.ca.gov).



## California Foundation for Independent Living Center

California Foundation for Independent Living Center (CFILC) connects Californians to local, community-based Independent Living Centers through its search tool. They are run by and for people with disabilities and serve people of all ages and disability types in their communities. Core services include information and referral, advocacy, independent living skills, peer counseling, transitions (institution and youth), and support with personal assistants. CFILC also powers statewide programs like Ability Tools (assistive technology lending, reuse and financing), Disability Disaster Access and Resources, and the Digital Access Project—making it easier to get devices, backup power, and affordable connectivity. Find your local center at [cfilc.org/ilcs-search](http://cfilc.org/ilcs-search) or the California State Independent Living Council’s locator at [calsilc.ca.gov/independent-locator](http://calsilc.ca.gov/independent-locator).

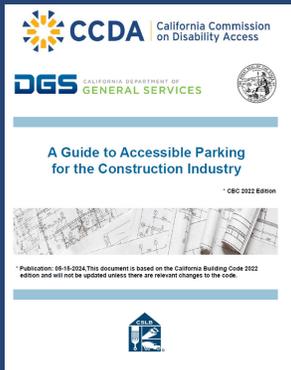
# Resources for Promoting Disability Access



## Guide to Accessible Parking: Business Owners and Operators

Topics included in the Business Owners and Operators Guide are guidance on using the toolkit, understanding the importance of accessibility, and defining key terms. It covers responsibilities and legal liabilities, parking accessibility evaluation, facility maintenance, and tax credit programs. The guide also addresses exterior accessible routes, curb ramps, accessible parking space requirements, and standards for parking spaces near outdoor dining and electric vehicle charging stations.

Check out [CCDA's Business Owners and Operators Accessible Parking Guide](#).



## A Guide to Accessible Parking for the Construction Industry

CCDA, with the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) and industry experts, created a Construction Industry Guide to help contractors meet the California Building Code Chapter 11B accessibility requirements for public parking lots. It covers accessible parking, routes, curb ramps, spaces near outdoor dining and elective vehicle charging, CASp roles, maintenance/alterations, and the benefits of compliance. Where contractor-designed plans are permitted, consult the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Check out [CCDA's Construction Industry Accessible Guide](#).



## ADA and Beyond: Resources & Guidance from the California Commission on Disability Access

In collaboration with the California Hotel and Lodging Association, CCDA gave a presentation on promoting accessibility compliance including common physical violations, how to maintain physical accessibility in accessible guest rooms, and CASp inspections.

Visit resource and guidance website at [ADA & Beyond: Resources & Guidance from CCDA](#).



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

The 2025 CCDA Lunch and Learn Webinar Series, developed in collaboration with the Pacific ADA Center for the second consecutive year, featured two sessions aimed at providing stakeholders with valuable information and resources about accessible parking and integrating accessibility into emergency preparedness.

Visit CCDA's website to view the webinar recording at [2025 Lunch and Learn Webinar Series](#).

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: [www.dgs.ca.gov/CCDA/events](http://www.dgs.ca.gov/CCDA/events)

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

(916) 319-9974 | [ccda@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:ccda@dgs.ca.gov) | [www.dgs.ca.gov/CCDA](http://www.dgs.ca.gov/CCDA)