

## **Phases of the ADA Judicial Compliance Project**

The first phase of the ADA Judicial Compliance Project involved research to identify the name and contact information for the ADA coordinators in all superior courts and appellate courts in California. It also involved identifying the names of the presiding judges of all superior courts.

Phase two involved our legal director, Thomas Coleman, producing an ADA webinar for superior court judges and judicial staff in California. A booklet of reference materials was also produced.

Phase three involved our legal intern, Maria Reyes Olmedo, sending an email to all ADA coordinators to introduce them to our project and to encourage them to view the webinar and review the reference materials and to share them with others.

Phase four involved a follow-up email to the ADA coordinators, asking them to direct us to the place on the court's website where we could find an ADA grievance procedure. Such a procedure and notice to the public is required for public entities with 50 or more employees. We are in the process of receiving responses from these courts. Some are adopting a grievance procedure in response to our communication.

In phase five, Tom is writing an email to the presiding judges in all 58 superior courts, inviting them to view the webinar and review the reference materials and to take steps to ensure that their court is in compliance with the *sua sponte* ADA obligations to litigants with known disabilities that impair communication and effective communication in legal proceedings. Maria is sending this email to the ADA coordinators and asking them to forward them to the presiding judges.

In phase six, Maria will file an administrative records request to 21 superior courts that accept such requests via email. She will ask for copies of documents regarding training of ADA coordinators on providing accommodations to litigants with cognitive disabilities. She will also ask for documents showing how many ADA accommodation requests were processed in that court in 2020 in general and in conservatorship proceedings in particular. They will probably respond that they have no such documents. But even that will give us valuable information to use in future communications to the chief justice and judicial council.

Phase seven will involve an ADA webinar for the appellate courts. *Making Appellate Justice Accessible to People with Cognitive Disabilities*. Associated with the webinar will be a booklet of reference materials. Tom will be producing the webinar and compiling the materials.

Phase eight will involve preparing a grievance to file with the Judicial Council for its failure to advise judges and judicial staff of their duties to provide accommodations for known disabilities even when no request is made. We will invite disability rights organizations and advocates to join with us in the grievance.

*Staffing for the project is done by Thomas F. Coleman and Maria Reyes Olmedo, with advice from Evan Nelson.*