



# Disability Rights online News

U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division

December 2005  
Issue Ten

## Disability Rights Online News

is a bi-monthly update about the Civil Rights Division's activities in the area of disability rights. The Division enforces laws prohibiting discrimination based on disability in employment, housing, access to businesses serving the public, access to government programs and services, including voting and public transportation, and unconstitutional conditions in institutions of confinement.

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## HOSPITAL GUARANTEES EQUAL ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES

An investigation by the Department and a private law suit has resulted in the Washington Hospital Center agreeing to ensure individuals with disabilities safe and equal access to medical services. On November 2, 2005, the Department signed a comprehensive settlement agreement with private plaintiffs and the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC, resolving claims against the hospital for failing to provide accessible medical services to individuals with disabilities. The settlement agreement addresses a variety of accessibility issues, including: ensuring accessible medical services and equipment, adopting nondiscriminatory policies, removing architectural barriers hospital-wide, and training staff on the ADA and the use of accessible equipment. "Accessibility in health care is vital for all Americans, and securing such access for individuals with disabilities helps meet the promise of the ADA," said Bradley J. Schlozman, then-Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, in a press release announcing the settlement. "We applaud this healthcare facility for working with us to reach a successful resolution."

The Hospital Center has specifically agreed to renovate a minimum of 35 patient rooms in the hospital to make them accessible to people with disabilities. The rooms will include accessible toilet facilities, other accessible features to the extent possible within existing space constraints, and adjustable height beds. Adjustable height beds enable people with mobility impairments to get in and out of the beds safely and independently. Moreover, when not operating at full capacity, the Hospital Center will hold open the accessible rooms for patients with disabilities.

The Hospital Center also will survey all of its equipment for compliance with ADA standards and will purchase new accessible equipment, including exam tables and chairs, lifts, radiologic equipment, and wheelchair scales, to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive equal access to the medical facility and the services that it provides.

## ADA BUSINESS CONNECTION MEETS IN PHOENIX AND WASHINGTON

The Civil Rights Division recently hosted ADA Business Connection meetings in Phoenix, Arizona, and Washington, DC. This initiative aims to make everyday commerce more accessible to people with disabilities by bringing together local and national leaders of business and disability communities to discuss issues of mutual concern, by developing materials that explain the ADA to business owners and managers, and by making these materials available through an ADA Business Connection page on the ADA Website.

On September 27, 2005, then-Acting Assistant Attorney General Bradley Schlozman met with leaders of business and disability organizations in Phoenix, Arizona. The meeting was co-hosted by Richard H. Dozer, President, Arizona Diamondbacks, and Bill Scott, President, Abilities UNlimited, Inc., and focused on attracting and serving customers with disabilities in arts and entertainment venues. Also on the agenda were Mollie Lakin-Hayes, Assistant Director, Arizona Commission on the Arts, Phil Pangrazio, Executive Director, Arizona Bridge to Independent Living,

and Deputy Assistant Attorney General Loretta King. Ms. Lakin-Hayes summarized the meeting by saying, "I think today is a real opportunity for us to think about what we can do collectively and systemically to make the greater [Phoenix] Valley a place where active people with disabilities can be active in all parts of the entertainment culture that's here."

On November 2, 2005, then-Acting AAG Schlozman hosted another ADA Business Connection meeting with leaders of national business and disability organizations in Washington, DC. Dr. Stephanie Pace, Mathematics Resource Specialist with Prince George's County, Maryland, Public Schools, and Timothy Adams, President and CEO of Systems

Application and Technologies, Inc., discussed maintenance of accessible features in retail and hotel establishments. DAAG Loretta King then led an energetic discussion about devising plans to maintain access and to develop policies that address concerns when customers face barriers. Following the meeting Mr. Adams said, on behalf of the disability community, "Thank you for helping to give all of us a voice."

Visit the ADA Business Connection page at [www.ada.gov/business.htm](http://www.ada.gov/business.htm) for business-related ADA information and publications. Learn more about the ADA Business Connection initiative by accessing the Disability Right Online Newsletter archives, Issues Nos. 2, 7, and 8.



**Acting AAG Schlozman addresses ADA Business Connection meeting in Phoenix**

## **DETROIT'S DISABLED COMMUNITY WILL HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Individuals who use wheelchairs in Detroit will no longer have to wait while city buses with inoperable lifts pass them by. On November 3, 2005, the Department obtained a settlement in *Dilworth v. City of Detroit*. The suit alleged that the city's fixed route public bus system violated Title II of the ADA and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act because the city failed to maintain operable wheelchair lifts on its public buses and failed to provide a level of service to persons with disabilities that is equal to that afforded to non-disabled persons.

Under the terms of the settlement agreement, which was signed by the Department,

private plaintiffs, and the City of Detroit, the city has agreed to (1) bring all of its buses into compliance with the ADA; (2) maintain and repair wheelchair lifts promptly; (3) provide alternative transportation promptly when wheelchair lifts are temporarily inoperable; (4) train drivers on how to operate the lifts, assist passengers with disabilities, and promptly obtain alternative transportation when needed; (5) appoint an ADA coordinator and implement a complaint system to ensure that ADA-related complaints are promptly addressed and resolved; and (6) hire an independent monitor to evaluate the city's compliance with the settlement order.

## **ICE CREAM PARLOR WILL MAKE ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Individuals with disabilities will now have access to a New Jersey ice cream parlor. On August 10, 2005, the Department entered into a settlement agreement with the owner and lessee of Mrs. Walker's Famous Ice Cream in Beachwood, New

Jersey. The owner and lessee of Mrs. Walker's have agreed to modify its current accessible parking space to make it "van-accessible," to install accessible handrails for the existing ramp, and to provide an accessible entrance.

## **RADIOLOGY GROUP WILL IMPROVE SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Valley Radiologists Medical Group, a radiological imaging company with eight office locations in Northern California, will make several improvements ensuring persons with disabilities equal access to its services. Under a settlement agreement with the Department signed on November 2, the company has agreed to: (1) purchase four mechanical lifts and eight transfer boards to assist people who use wheelchairs in getting onto examination tables; (2) ask a patient, when scheduling an appointment, if he or she will need any special assistance, modification of policy, or auxiliary aid or service at the examination because of a disability, and be prepared to provide the appropriate assistance and equipment at the appointment; (3) adopt a non-discrimination policy and post it in each of its office locations; and (4) conduct training for all its medical and administrative staff on Title III of the ADA, operation of the transfer equipment, and techniques for assisting individuals with mobility disabilities to transfer to exam tables.

## DEPARTMENT SETTLES CASE INVOLVING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST EMPLOYEE AFFECTED WITH HIV DISEASE

The Marion County Nursing Home, Inc., will pay a nurse's aid affected with HIV disease \$25,000 in damages in connection with an ADA discrimination claim. On October 25, 2005, the Department simultaneously filed a Complaint and a Consent Decree in federal court in St. Louis in a case against the nursing home, which had terminated a nurse's aide when it learned that she was affected with HIV disease. Nurse's aides perform only ministerial tasks such as bathing, grooming, feeding, and general care of patients; they do not perform any invasive procedures. The consent decree provides that the nursing home will not discriminate on the basis of disability, specifically including HIV, and will conduct an individualized assessment of whether individuals are qualified for a job.

**Jean Langendorf, center, receives an award from Ollie Cantos and Nicole Porter of the Department of Justice**

## RESTAURANT WILL MAKE ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

A Colorado restaurant will make improvements to its facility and parking lot for the benefit of individuals with mobility impairments. On September 1, 2005, the Department entered into a settlement agreement with the owner of Oskar Blues Grill & Brew in Lyons, Colorado. The owner agreed to provide at least one van-accessible parking space,

to make the first and second floor restrooms accessible, and to make the second floor accessible by installing an elevator or ramp. The owner also agreed to pay \$1,000 to the complainant and a \$500 civil penalty. This matter arose after a previous ramp to the second floor was removed, eliminating access for people with mobility impairments.

## MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING ACCESS FORUM PROGRAM A SUCCESS IN TEXAS

On November 16, 2005, in Richardson, Texas, the Civil Rights Division held its second "Multi-Family Housing Access Forum" program. The program's objective is to educate architects, builders, developers, and other housing professionals of their legal obligations under the Fair

Housing Act as well as establish a continuing dialogue between housing professionals and disability advocates about the best approaches for obtaining voluntary compliance with the law. The theme of the November 16 program was "Models That Work: Celebrating Accessible Housing Partnerships," and the program was attended by approximately seventy fair housing advocates, disability advocates, and housing professionals interested in fair housing and multi-family housing issues.

The November 16 program featured opening remarks from Special Assistant to the Assistant Attorney General



(Texas Forum, continued)

Olegario “Ollie” D. Cantos, VII. Mr. Cantos emphasized that accessible multi-family housing is best attained through a partnership between the federal government, the building industry, and disability rights advocates. Through this cooperative partnership, he added, more housing will be made available allowing people with disabilities to have a home of their own, just like everyone else. In addition, Mr. Cantos noted that while the Department will litigate compliance violations, it is less costly for developers to plan properly prior to construction than to tear down and correct poor designs. The program also featured three local speakers: Jean Langendorf, Executive Director of the United Cerebral Palsy of Texas; Margaret Shaw, a partner at Tekoa Partners, Ltd., a developer of market rate and affordable multi-family housing based in Austin, Texas; and Kristi Thomas, president and CEO of Accessology, Inc., a consulting firm on accessibility issues based in Dallas, Texas. Each of the speakers discussed how they were able to successfully work with housing professionals and disability advocates to build affordable and accessible multi-family housing. The Division’s next forum will be held in the spring of 2006. The previous forum was held in Chantilly, Virginia, in May of 2005.

## **DEPARTMENT DISMANTLES DISCRIMINATORY POLICIES AT CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY**

On October 3, 2005, a federal court in Pennsylvania approved a consent decree reached by the Department and the owners of Twining Village, a continuing care retirement community for persons 65 and older in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The Department’s complaint alleged that the owners of the facility banned manual wheelchairs from its dining rooms until February 2005 and continued to ban motorized wheelchairs and scooters from those rooms and other public and common use areas when the lawsuit was filed, in violation of the Fair Housing Act. The owners also allegedly required people who use scooters to indemnify the owners and to submit to an

evaluation and training program annually, regardless of their “driving record.”

The agreement dismantles these policies. Residents of Twining Village who have physical disabilities may use mobility aids throughout the entire Twining Village complex, without the requirement for indemnification or annual evaluations. The owners will pay one victim of the former ban on manual wheelchairs \$17,500 in damages, establish a \$67,500 settlement fund for other victims, and pay the government a \$7,500 civil penalty. The consent order also calls for employee training, record keeping, and monitoring through the use of testers, if necessary.

## **ILLINOIS MUNICIPALITY DENIES LAND-USE PERMIT FOR RESIDENTIAL FACILITY**

On September 14, 2005, the Department filed a lawsuit in federal court in Chicago alleging that a municipality in Kane County, Illinois, violated the Fair Housing Act by refusing a permit for a “sober home” to provide a supportive environment for nine recovering alcoholics and drug users. The Village of South

Elgin denied the permit after hearings at which opponents focused on the addictions of the residents. The Department’s complaint asks the court to order South Elgin to grant the permit and to pay money damages to persons who were injured by its discriminatory actions.

## DEPARTMENT SUES HOUSING AGENCY IN IOWA FOR DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

On September 1, 2005, the Department filed a lawsuit in federal court in Council Bluffs, Iowa, charging that the local municipal housing agency, its executive director, and one of its employees had discriminated against individuals with mental disabilities, in violation of the Fair Housing Act. In its complaint, the Department alleges that the defendants discriminated against two individuals who applied for public housing by 1) inquiring, in the application form, about any history of mental

health treatment, 2) requesting that they sign waivers for release of their mental health records, and 3) rejecting their applications, in one case, based in part on the information gleaned from the applicant's mental health records and, in the other case, based on the applicant's refusal to sign the requested waiver. The complaint also includes a claim that the defendants engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination and seeks monetary damages on behalf of other aggrieved persons.

## 5,400 GROUND FLOOR APARTMENTS IN SEVEN STATES TO BE RETROFITTED

A developer and several architectural firms will pay more than \$1 million in penalties and damages in the most comprehensive settlement ever obtained by the Department in a housing accessibility case. On September 30, 2005, a federal court in Michigan approved a consent decree resolving the Department's two lawsuits against the developer of 49 apartment complexes and several architectural firms in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Virginia, and

Nebraska. Under the agreement the defendants, who designed and constructed the apartment complexes at issue, agreed to retrofit 5,400 ground-floor apartments, pay up to \$950,000 to individuals harmed by the lack of accessible features at the properties, and pay a \$110,000 civil penalty.

After conducting an initial investigation, the Department filed suit in 2001 in South Bend, Indiana, and later filed a related suit in Detroit, Michigan, in 2002. The Department alleged

that the defendants discriminated against persons with disabilities in the design and construction of the complexes, in violation of the Fair Housing Act. The lawsuits also alleged that the rental offices at a number of the properties were designed and constructed in violation of the ADA. The agreement resolved both lawsuits, and a dismissal of the Indiana case was approved by a federal court there on October 3, 2005.

Many of the apartments at issue were built such that the front entrance could be reached only by going down stairs and was therefore inaccessible to wheelchair users. The only way a person using a wheelchair could get into the units was by taking a lengthy and circuitous route around the back to the rear patio door. In February 2003, the district court in Michigan enjoined the Rose companies from continuing to build apartments with this design. The United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit affirmed this decision in May 2004, ruling that this design violated the Fair Housing Act. Under the settlement agreement, the defendants have agreed that future multifamily housing they build will have accessible front entrances.

## HOUSING UNITS IN NORTH CAROLINA WILL GET ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Meridian Park Apartments in Greenville, North Carolina, will pay more than \$35,000 in penalties and will make improvements on dozens of apartments. On October 11, 2005, a federal court in North Carolina approved a consent decree requiring accessibility improvements to the interiors of 73 apartment units and the common areas of the Meridian Park Apartments. The consent order also requires the defendants to pay \$26,000 to victims of the inaccessible features and \$10,000 to the government as a civil penalty. The defendants include the developers, owners,

builders, and engineers of the complex. The original architect for the apartment complex resolved claims relating to the complex in February of 2003 by paying \$100,000 into a retrofit fund.

This lawsuit is the third enforcement action by the Department in Greenville concerning the accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act. The two previous cases were also resolved by consent orders in federal court. All three cases were brought to the attention of the Department by the North Carolina Fair Housing Center located in Raleigh.

## TEN APARTMENT COMPLEXES IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON, TO PAY \$540,000 AND RETROFIT MORE THAN 700 UNITS

On September 28, 2005, a federal court in Washington approved a consent decree resolving the Department's lawsuit alleging that the developers and architect failed to design and build 10 multi-family housing complexes located in Spokane in compliance with the accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act and the ADA. These properties,

including Cedar Springs Estates I through IV, Cedar Creek Village I and II, Cedar Chateau Estates A and Cedar Chateaus Estates B, Cedar Forest Estates, and Cedar Canyon Villas, will be retrofitted to enhance their accessibility to individuals with physical disabilities.

The violations identified by the Department in its complaint include steps at the front

entrances and high thresholds at the patio-side entrances of ground floor units, lack of clear floor space in kitchens, lack of removable cabinets and grab bar reinforcements in the bathrooms, and lack of accessible routes between ground floor units and public use areas. Under the agreement, the defendants will pay up to \$500,000 to individuals who were harmed by the lack of accessible features at the properties. The balance of the fund, if any, will be used to provide accessible housing in the community. The agreement also provides for the retrofitting of more than 700 ground floor units at the 10 properties, a \$25,000 civil penalty, and a \$15,000 fund for accessibility training for local designers and developers of multifamily housing. In addition, the agreement enjoins the defendants from violating the Fair Housing Act, enjoins the developer defendants from violating the ADA, and provides for fair housing training for supervisory employees.

## ADA MEDIATION HIGHLIGHTS

The ADA Mediation Program is a Department-sponsored initiative intended to resolve ADA complaints in an efficient manner. Mediation cases are initiated upon referral by the Department and when both the complainant and the respondent agree to participate. The program utilizes professional mediators who are trained in the legal requirements of the ADA and has proven effective in resolving complaints at less cost and in less time than traditional investigations or litigation. Over 75% of all complaints mediated have been settled successfully.

Watching a movie is one of America's most popular leisure activities. In this issue, we focus on complaints against movie theaters that have been successfully mediated through the Department's program.

- A wheelchair user complained that a California theater was not accessible. Because the parties agreed it would not be readily achievable to remove certain barriers to restrooms, the director made arrangements for patrons with disabilities to use the accessible restrooms of a business next door and agreed to post appropriate directional signage in the theater lobby. The theater agreed to post signage at the box office directing people with disabilities to the accessible route to purchase tickets, provide disability awareness training to staff, and include information in promotional materials about the availability of assistive listening devices, sign language interpreters, and audio descriptions. The parties also agreed to continue to work together to locate additional funding and resources to make the theater as accessible as possible in the future.
- Also in California, an individual with a mobility disability complained that a theater did not have accessible restrooms. The theater adjusted the doors to both the men's and women's restrooms and installed raised toilet seats. The theater also agreed to provide accessible restroom signage and to run an announcement on the movie screen prior to each film informing the audience about the accessible restrooms. The theater also provided the complainant with complimentary movie tickets.
- A wheelchair user complained that a Colorado theater placed a portable concession stand in the wheelchair accessible seating area. The theater owner apologized to the complainant and provided him with a copy of a letter sent to all theater managers reiterating its policy that accessible seating areas must remain unobstructed and available for use at all times.
- A wheelchair user in Florida complained that a cinema complex with ten movie theaters did not provide accessible seating or accessible doors in the individual theaters and failed to provide accessible restrooms. The cinema owner removed existing seats and installed accessible seating in a variety of locations within each theater and added signage identifying the location of the accessible seating. The owner also modified the toilet stalls in both the men's and women's restrooms to make them accessible and reduced the door opening force on all restroom and auditorium doors.
- Also in Florida, a person who is hard of hearing complained that the only theater in the area that showed art films had a poorly functioning assistive listening system, making it difficult for persons who are hard of hearing to enjoy the films. The theater installed a new assistive listening system.
- In New Jersey, a wheelchair user complained that the first floor auditoriums in a cinema

(ADA Mediation, continued)

complex had no accessible seating and that the second floor auditoriums were inaccessible. The theater agreed to install accessible seating, companion seating, and aisle transfer seating in the first floor auditoriums; place signage near each ticket counter notifying customers of the availability of accessible seating and assistive listening devices; and change the telephone information announcement to identify the auditorium number of each movie playing, the accessible seating available in that auditorium, and the availability of assistive listening devices. In theaters with inaccessible auditoriums, the theater will show all new movies for at least the first two weekends in accessible auditoriums. Afterwards, movies being shown in inaccessible auditoriums will be relocated to an accessible auditorium at

a mutually agreeable date and time upon request of a customer with a disability. The theater also made restrooms and ticket machines accessible and trained staff on the use and maintenance of assistive listening devices.

- Also, in New Jersey, a person with a mobility impairment complained that the seating in a movie theater was only accessible by stairs. The theater landlord installed an accessible ramp and the theater owner trained staff on how to provide courteous and effective service to patrons with disabilities.

- A wheelchair user complained that a New York theater was not accessible and had no accessible restrooms. The theater agreed to install a ramp at the entrance and to create an accessible path of travel from each parking lot to the entrance. The theater agreed to create several

wheelchair accessible seating locations in the theater, to modify a restroom to make it accessible, and to install handrails for stairs at side and back entrances to the building.

- In Ohio, a person who is hard of hearing complained that a movie theater did not properly maintain its assistive listening devices. The theater company agreed to conduct a maintenance check of headsets on a weekly basis in nearly 100 theaters and to provide annual maintenance training to employees. The company posted signs indicating the availability of assistive listening equipment at all ticket booths in each theater. In addition, the theater company trained all customer service personnel on the requirements of the ADA and on skills for interacting with people with disabilities, including customers who are deaf and hard of hearing.

## RECENT ADA OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- On August 24, Division staff made two ADA presentations at Virginia's First Annual "Ask the Experts" Conference sponsored by the Virginia ADA Coalition in Charlottesville, Virginia. One presentation celebrated the 15th anniversary of the ADA, the other addressed Project Civic Access and the role of an ADA Coordinator. Staff of the Equal

Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Access Board also made presentations. Approximately 60 people attended the one-day event.

- On August 25, Division staff gave a presentation on the non-employment provisions of the ADA at the 2005 National Equal Opportunity Conference hosted

in Washington, DC, by the U.S. Department of Labor Civil Rights Center in partnership with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. Conference attendees included federal, state, and local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Administrators, staff, and Equal Opportunity Officers; Equal Opportunity Officers for Job Corps Centers

(Outreach, continued)

and Contractor Facilities; and national and regional staff of the Department of Labor's Employment Standards Administration.

■ On September 1, Division staff spoke at the 8th Biennial Deaf Seniors of America Conference in San Francisco, California. The presentation explained the ADA as it applies to deaf seniors regarding hospitals, social services, and state and local government programs.

■ On September 12, Division staff conducted an ADA training for EEOC staff of the Milwaukee District Office in Madison, Wisconsin, in conjunction with their annual technical assistance program seminar. The training addressed Titles II and III of the ADA.

■ On September 15, at the request of the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Division staff discussed the activities of the Disability Rights Section and its enforcement of the ADA with 30 members of the Norwegian State Council on Disability who were in Washington on a fact-finding tour. The Norwegian government is preparing to submit anti-discrimination legislation to the country's Parliament on behalf of persons with disabilities.

■ From September 21-25, Division staff attended the Oklahoma State Fair in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. At an ADA booth, staff answered questions and disseminated ADA information to some of the fair's 900,000 attendees.

■ On September 22, Division staff made two presentations at the 2005 North American Division Conference of the Foodservice Consultants Society International meeting in Anaheim, California. The presentations covered the ADA accessibility requirements and how these requirements apply to the design of foodservice facilities.

■ On September 23, Special Assistant Ollie Cantos and Division staff briefed a delegation of government officials from Vietnam on the experience of the Department of Justice in implementing and enforcing the ADA. Vietnam is considering the enactment of disability rights legislation.

■ On September 29, Division staff participated on a panel at the 2005 Interagency Disability Educational Awareness Showcase Conference in Washington, DC. The panel addressed the topic "IT Accessibility: Enforcement Issues and Updates."

■ On September 30, Division staff participated in an ADA panel discussion and open forum for the Kennedy Center's Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. The presentation addressed how the ADA affects cultural arts. The audience consisted of approximately 150 ADA/504 Coordinators and Accessibility Managers.

■ On October 3, Division staff gave a presentation in Bloomington, Indiana, on behalf of Sign Language Interpreting Services. The presentation addressed ADA issues of interest to the deaf community.

■ From October 8-12, Division staff attended the National Conference on Correctional Health Care in Denver, Colorado, sponsored by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care. This annual event for correctional administrators and health care professionals includes a variety of seminars and workshops addressing health care issues, trends, and challenges of providing health care services in correctional settings. Staff were on hand to distribute ADA technical assistance materials, answer ADA related questions, and attend seminars.

(Outreach, continued)

- On October 12, Division staff presented a one-day workshop on the ADA and ADA Standards for Accessible Design for city employees, architects, and contractors in Tucson, Arizona. The event was sponsored by the City of Tucson's Office of Equal Opportunity Programs.
- From October 19-22, Division staff attended Closing The Gap's 23rd Annual Conference in Bloomington, Minnesota. At an ADA booth, staff answered questions and disseminated ADA information to some of the conference's 2,500 attendees.
- On October 21, Division staff gave a presentation at the National Recreation and Parks Association's Congress in San Antonio, Texas. The presentation addressed the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, the recent Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on revising the ADA Standards, and the Department's rulemaking process.
- On October 24-27, Division staff participated in four general sessions, one all-day workshop, and two part-day workshops at the National Association of ADA Coordinators' Conference in Miami, Florida. The topics covered a range of ADA issues including equal access to programs and services, employment, case law, how to avoid lawsuits, emergency management, and how to help others understand the impact of building code violations. The four-day conference also featured speakers and panelists from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Department of Transportation, Department of Education, U.S. Access Board, and other organizations.
- On October 27, Division staff gave the keynote speech at a one-day conference for municipal ADA coordinators and municipal attorneys in Hartford, Connecticut. The talk provided an overview of the ADA and new developments in the law.
- On October 28, Division staff participated in four panels during a one-day conference sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic ADA & IT Center and the Maryland Coalition for ADA Education in Linthicum, Maryland. Topics included information on the Department's latest ADA cases, issues, projects, and initiatives. Representatives from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Access Board, and three representatives of local government jurisdictions also served as panel members.
- On October 28, Division staff made a presentation before the Medical Accessibility Task Force in Orlando, Florida. The Task Force consists of the Coordinating Council, the Florida Medical Association, and the Florida Hospital Association. The speech addressed how the medical community can comply with the ADA.
- On November 2, Division staff made a presentation at the Accessible Emergency Notification and Communication Conference held at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. The recent hurricane disaster has emphasized the importance of access to emergency communications for people with disabilities. The presentation explained the ADA requirements for 9-1-1 services.
- On November 3, Division staff made a presentation at the 17th Annual Conference of the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects in Richmond, Virginia. The conference attracted over 1800 architects and associates from Virginia and surrounding states. The speech addressed the architectural requirements of the ADA, the Architectural Barriers Act, the Fair Housing Act, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.