

SAN MATEO COUNTY

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ANNUAL UPDATE

October 7, 2025

WHAT IS THE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES?

- Established Sept. 10, 1991 (BoS Resolution 55400)
 - Combined Disabilities Task Force and Coordinating Council on Developmental Disabilities
 - Motto: Create, Educate, Advocate, Celebrate!
- 15 members (currently looking to fill 2 seats)
- General Meetings: Every 4th Thursday of each month at County Center
 - No meetings in July or December
 - Public can attend virtually

COMMITTEES

- Executive (2nd Wednesday each month)
 - Officers and Chairs of each committee
- Advocacy, Outreach, and Legislation (2nd Monday each month)
- ADA Compliance (1st Thursday each month)
 - Reps from San Mateo County departments: Public Works, County Parks, Human Resources, Real Property Services, County Attorney, and the County Executive's Office

COMMITTEES

- Accessible Transportation (4th Monday each month)
 - Reps from SamTrans
- Special Events (ad hoc)
 - Inclusion Festival and Disabilities Arts Showcase
- Youth & Family (re-building year)
 - Plans Transition to Independence Fair (TIF) in collaboration with high school districts

PURPOSE AND GOALS

- Advise the BoS on disability-related issues
- Educate residents of San Mateo County on the needs of people with disabilities
- Create leadership opportunities for people with disabilities
- Advocate for people with disabilities on system-wide issues, especially safety
 - Emergency preparedness
 - Abuse prevention; improving resources for victims of abuse
- Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to mutually benefit the disabled community

PRESENTERS SINCE OCT. 2024

- Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County
- Housing Modifications: Habitat for Humanity GSF, Rebuilding Together
- Paratransit Services: SamTrans Accessible Transit Services, Peninsula Family Services "Got Wheels!" program, Uber Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) program
- Red Cross "Hands Only CPR" training

PRESENTERS SINCE OCT. 2024

- UC Berkeley Disability Studies Minor Program
- “Be Red Cross Ready” presentation (focus is on emergency evacuations)
- San Mateo Co. Transportation Authority (101 Corridor Connect)
- Disability Etiquette
- San Mateo County Title II ADA Coordinator (Title II and Public Accessibility)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE OCT. 2024

- Hosted Disabilities Arts Showcase (Hall of Justice gallery)
- Wrote letter supporting County's plan to include a Quiet Room in 500 Building; recommended Quiet Rooms in all County buildings.
- Supported Capital Improvement Projects by assessing and recommending barrier removal initiatives across San Mateo County, including projects such as the North Fair Oaks Library and the El Granada Barrier Removal Project.
- Held a Virtual Town Hall to assess emergency needs of disabled residents; shared info with Dept. of Emergency Management

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE OCT. 2024

- Wrote letter supporting continued financial support for Community Wellness and Crisis Response Team program and recommended making it County-wide
- Updated Bylaws and created Governance and Tabling Calendars
- Wrote letter recommending “Demystifying Disability” by Emily Ladau for County staff
- Hosted 6th Annual Inclusion Festival at County Center (first time at this location)

COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, OR INTERACTION

- Office of Arts and Culture (Disabilities Arts Showcase)
- Dept. of Emergency Management (EOP Update, Disaster Preparedness Day)
- Youth Commission (Networking Session)
- DA's Office Victim Services Division (Survivor Safe Team)
- Waymo (Learned about disability-related features; gave feedback)
- ADS Community Enrichment Advisory Committee (Loneliness)
- Commission on Aging (invited to share about the CoD)

UPCOMING PROJECTS AND EVENTS

- Disabilities Arts Showcase (Special Events)
 - Center for Creativity in Redwood City, full month of October
 - Reception 10/18/25, 1-3pm
 - Workshop 10/25/25, 1-3pm
- Cooling centers survey (Advocacy, Outreach, & Legislation)
- Transition to Independence Fair (Youth and Family)
- Inclusion Festival (Special Events)
- Visits to Capital Improvement Project (CIP) sites (ADA Compliance)
- Accessible transportation resource guide (Accessible Transportation)

CELEBRATIONS

- Commissioners with approved ADA accommodations can attend and vote virtually
- Changing Aging and Adult Services (AAS) to Aging and Disability Services (ADS)
- For 2 weeks in July, flew the Disability Pride Flag at County Center for the first time
- Manzanita Hall for General Meetings
- Secured a designated Paratransit stop at County Center.

SPECIAL SHOUT-OUTS

- CoD Board Liaison, Supervisor Lisa Gauthier
- Connie Franco, Legislative Aide to Supervisor Gauthier
- Aging and Disability Services staff
 - Director Lee Pullen, Shawne O’Connell, Anna Sawamura, & Andrew Eng
- Dept. of Public Works for their help during the Inclusion Festival
- The Board of Supervisors and County Executive

