

Behind the Scenes



Executive Director's Report

The Access Services Board of Directors met on October 23, 2023.

The Board approved the Consent Calendar, which included awarding contracts for eligibility appeals providers, renewing Agency insurance policies and reappointing TPAC members. The Board also approved contract extensions for the West/Central and Northern regions' service providers and a contract award for the Eastern region service provider.

The Board also modified its meeting structure and will now meet as a full Board every month. The Board policy committees that were previously established will no longer meet.

Access' Annual Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 1, 2023. The next Board meeting will be Monday, December 4, 2023.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Access Services hosts virtual Reasonable Modification Training

Access Services recently hosted a virtual training course on federal reasonable modification/ accommodation requirements. The training was led by David Rishel, Principal at Delta Services Group, who has over 20 years of consulting experience in ADA paratransit, rider eligibility, and training.



Mr. Rishel provided valuable information on how paratransit agencies may utilize reasonable modifications to accommodate individuals with disabilities. During the training, Rishel outlined the federal requirements for reasonable modifications and explained what is considered a "reasonable" request. He explained that requests that fundamentally alter the core service may be denied, and then provided examples of such requests. Rishel also highlighted the importance of defining the core service model when addressing modification requests; he explained that identifying fundamental alterations of the service implies that the service model has been clearly defined.

Following Mr. Rishel's presentation, staff asked questions regarding specific requests and discussed possible scenarios related to reasonable modifications. When considering reasonable modification requests, Mr. Rishel advised participants to keep in mind whether a passenger truly needs the accommodation to use the ADA paratransit system, as opposed to wanting the accommodation. Through this virtual training, staff gained a greater understanding of the reasonable modification process and the types of requests that Access can accommodate. Access continually seeks to provide its employees with opportunities for education while improving the service for riders.

Taylor S. Ingman
Customer Relations Associate

CTSA Extension hosts Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Training

Access' CTSA Learning and Development Program recently hosted the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for their Disability Program Manager training. The EEOC plays a vital role in enforcing federal laws that prohibit discrimination in the workplace.



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

This class taught attendees about the responsibilities, importance, and impact of the Disability Program Manager in the workplace. This training also aimed to cultivate an environment where persons with disabilities thrive professionally.

The Disability Program Manager role is responsible for overseeing and managing disability-related programs, policies, and initiatives aimed at ensuring equal employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This role falls under the broader context of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce. The major topic areas discussed included: Sections 501 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; "Pregnant Workers Fairness Act" (PWFA); the reasonable accommodation process; the roles and responsibilities of the Disability Program Manager; and the importance of diversity. The class also featured interactive scenarios on age discrimination, harassment, and what providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities looked like.

By supporting the rights of individuals with disabilities, ensuring equal opportunities, and facilitating a culture of inclusion, the Disability Program Manager contributes to a more equitable society and a workforce that reflects the diversity of our communities throughout Los Angeles County. The Access CTSA Program looks forward to our next collaboration with the EEOC.

Mayra Noriega
CTSA Analyst

Commendations

"I am filing a Smile for Brian. He was very helpful and was able to schedule me a quicker trip home. Brian did an amazing job!"

Reyna Vazquez Enciso
Rider since Sept 2016

"Juana, my driver from CTI, is punctual and has a beautiful personality. I am filing a Smile for her going above and beyond."

Deloris Floyd
Rider since June 2005