



DR. KAROLYN SMITH  
CHAIR

COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
5500 OVERLAND AVE., SUITE 370, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123  
(858) 505-6628

LAURA HANDZEL  
VICE CHAIR

## Meeting Minutes



Regular Meeting – December 17, 2025 – 3:00 pm

**Members Present:** Chair Dr. Karolyn Smith, Vice Chair Laura Handzel, Secretary Susan Madison, Janette Shelton, Jessica Kramer (teleconference), Brennan Pearson, Paul Houston Sr., and Michelle Krug

**Members Absent:** Julie Neward

**County Staff:** Todd Hood and Kate McKnight

**Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order at 3:06pm by the Vice Chair.

### Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

### Statement (just cause) and/or Consideration of a Request to Participate Remotely (emergency circumstances)

- None
- Jessica Kramer via teleconference per ADA Modification Request

### Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes – November 26, 2025

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the November 2025 meeting minutes; committee approved.

### Non-Agenda Comment

- The Coaster is stopping 2-3 blocks away from where individuals can purchase tickets
- MTS buses stop at 7pm on weekends and you are unable to book a ride after that time in certain lower income areas such as southeast San Diego, but it is available in areas such as La Jolla

### 2026 Legislative Program

Todd Hood brought forth the County of San Diego's 2026 Legislative Program to insure the committee is aware of the plan as many areas of interest overlap with the committee's focus areas.

### **Office of Emergency Services**

Guest Speaker: Nicholas Zubeil, Senior Emergency Services Coordinator

#### Emergency Operations Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates

Nicholas reviewed plan updates and timelines, available online:

<https://www.alertsandiego.org/en-us/preparedness.html>

#### Committee discussion:

- Local rural residents struggle with support during natural disasters when there is no federal disaster declaration.
- Committee discussed the operational challenges of multi organizational responses and jurisdictions.
- Committee discussed the need for inclusion of persons with disabilities (of all types) in planning and testing of emergency response plans.
- Need for additional support for those who do not drive. OES is looking at transportation planning as well as locations and resources available during emergencies.
- Recommended to reach out to VFW Hall in Lakeside for partnership with Patriots Pantry for food resources
- How to communicate resources to those who are home bound, who don't have internet or phones, etc. OES is looking at multiple avenues of how to communicate and how to support these populations.
  - For example, access to get to cooking centers during heat waves. Receiving personal cooling fans then requires proof of income and picking up the fan.
- 211 has gaps when they are only aware of the services that have coordinated with them and maintaining current lists of resources.
  - Recommendation that there is a disclaimer with 211 about resource availability
  - Recommendation for greater advertisement of 988 for Access and Crisis Line
- Collaboration opportunity to put out a video on emergency preparedness using committee members with lived experience
- Community preparedness training is available upon request but there are not standard and regular events scheduled.

The committee will put together a list of areas of concern and recommendations for emergency preparedness to share with Nick and OES for consideration and incorporation.

### **Working Session – Strategic Focus Areas**

- Emergency Preparedness / Public Safety
  - No comments
- Transportation Accessibility
  - No comments
- Housing Accessibility
  - There needs to be a focus on combining affordable and accessible housing. There are many projects focused on affordable housing that does not include accessibility requirements, at least requiring a percentage of designation units.
  - Universal design should be used during planning stages to support accessibility needs
  - Urgent and immediate crisis for persons with disabilities who are homeless, those experiencing mental health crisis, and emergency housing vouchers cancellation
  - Those with a County case worker related to housing do not have an ADA interactive process to assist
  - Areas of focus:
    - Affordable and accessible
    - Immediate access for short-term housing
    - Accessibility in long-term housing
    - Case management and support
- Behavioral Health Services/Crisis Stabilization
  - No comments

### **Parking Fees for Persons with Disabilities**

Tabled to January.

### **Committee Business**

- Officer Elections are scheduled for January:
  - Nominations:
    - Chair:
      - Laura Handzel
      - Jannette Shelton
      - Brennan Pearson

- Vice Chair
  - Laura Handzel
  - Brennan Pearson
  - Sue Madison
- Secretary:
  - Brennan Pearson
  - Julie Neward
- Organizational Goals
- Future Meeting Structure
  - Room 302 will be primary and room 306A will be the alternate

### **New Business – Future Agenda Items**

- Review bylaws with new members

### **Meeting Adjournment**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:01pm.

Click the link below for a video recording of the meeting.

[Committee for Persons with Disabilities Meeting – December 17, 2025](#)

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday January 21, 2026, at the following address:

County Administrative Center  
 Room 302  
 1600 Pacific Highway  
 San Diego, CA 92101

Committee for Persons with Disabilities website:

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hr/CPD.html>

County of San Diego Accessibility Awareness website:

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/cao/oec/accessibility/>