

08/24/2010 Access to Facilities Meeting Minutes

Present: Ms. Sandra Lugo-Gines, co-chair, Atty. Roy Smith, co-chair, Ms. Virginia Apple, Mr. Robert Burke, Ms. Michelle Burroughs Atty. Stephen Ment, Ms. Debra Novaco and Atty. Steven Pelletier

Submitted by: Michelle Burroughs

- The Subcommittee began with a discussion of general feedback regarding the Access to Facilities Signage Assessment Checklist. There have been complaints regarding the document being in Excel and certain sections containing too much information. A Word document that could be filled out by hand would be more user-friendly. The information could then be compiled and transferred to an Excel spreadsheet. The checklist needs to provide more room for narrative. A suggestion was made that the Access to Facilities Committee member be provided with the most up-to-date version of the blue print for the court facility that they are visiting accompanied by a copy of a checklist that has been edited based on the blueprint. For security reasons, only public areas could be visible on these blueprints. This suggestion would need Mr. Robert Kilpatrick's approval before being implemented.
- The Subcommittee then had a brainstorming session regarding the content of the checklist. The following feedback was received:
- Regarding I. (Online Navigation):
 - The word 'online' in the first two questions is repetitive.
 - Question number two should contain an example to clarify the meaning of the question. Plain language should be used.
- Regarding II. (Telephonic Navigation):
 - This section should include questions regarding: the information provided by the automated phone response, whether or not the observer was disconnected as well as how long the caller had to remain on hold while waiting for a response.
 - The second question in this section should be divided into several questions regarding: public parking, jury parking and handicap accessible parking.
- Regarding III (External Navigation):
 - Due to the fact that at some court locations many who arrive do so by means of public transportation (i.e. buses and trains), a question should be added to address signage directing these individuals to the courthouse. Information regarding navigation to the courthouses via public transportation should also be made available online.
 - Question numbers one (Is road signage accurate from the highway?) and two (Is road signage available from local streets?) in this section should also include not applicable (n/a) as a response.

- The third question (Are all handicapped ways accessible from all directions leading into the facility) should be changed to: Where are the handicap accessible entrances? Where are the curb cuts? Are there signs directing the public to handicap accessible places?
- The language for the fourth question (Are there pedestrian instructions to the main entrance from the parking lot/garage?) should be changed to: Are there street signs that that direct you to the parking lot/garage? This question will be added: Is there signage that easily identifies parking garages?
- The following questions will also be added: Is there signage that identifies the type of courthouse (i.e. Family Court, Civil Court, Criminal Court etc;)? Are there walking directions from the main court entrance from the parking garage?
- Regarding IV (Interior Navigation) Section A. General Questions:
 - Question 1 (Are there any signs at the metal detector?) will be changed to: Are there any signs posted at the immediate court house door/entrance? If so, what do they say? What materials are they made of?
 - The second question should be: Are there any signs posted at the metal detector? If so, what do they say? What materials are they made of?
 - Question 2 (Is there are building directory?) should become the third question and also include: Where is it located?
- Regarding IV (Interior Navigation) Section B. Area Specific Questions:
 - The column entitled 'Type' that currently reads protruding/plaque should be changed to Type/Material (i.e. protruding/plaque/paper). A column entitled Where are they located? should be added.
 - The page setup for pages that include tables should be changed from portrait to landscape.
 - The areas located in the table should be listed in the order that they are normally found within court facilities, starting with the most common areas.
 - The column entitled Room # on directory should be changed to: Room # on directory/ n/a.
 - Courtrooms and internal courtroom signs will be added to the Area column.
- Regarding Section V (Other Signage):
 - Add: Are the areas of refuge clearly marked and located?
- Regarding Section VI (Informational and/or Restrictive Signage)
 - Examples of this type of signage should be added.

- The questions: Where is the sign? What does it say? should also include the following questions: What is it made of? Is this a sign produced by the marshals or the clerk's office?
- Regarding Section VII (Concerns or Suggestions):
 - A space for general comments pertaining to any of the sections will be added.
- The checklist should be updated to contain a building identification sheet (sample provided by Ms. Apple) listing basic information regarding the facility to be observed to be used as a cover sheet.
- Ms. Apple provided the workgroup with a copy of Accessibility Guidelines for the Government. It contains specific questions concerning elevators, parking etc; that the Subcommittee may want to include in the revised checklist. This information may also be beneficial to the Committee on Americans with Disabilities. The website to view this information is adaag.htm. All Judicial buildings must conform to State of Connecticut building codes and pass a fire inspection in order to receive a certificate of occupancy. The Department of Public Works has the final say regarding occupancy of Judicial buildings.
- Ms. Lugo Gines will incorporate all of the suggested changes to the Signage Assessment Checklist and email the updated checklist to the Committee on Access to Facilities members.
- Local committees can utilize the Branch's design standards documentation provided by Mr. Kilpatrick to identify deficiencies concerning signage at courthouse facilities and make recommendations based on those deficiencies. The Subcommittee can make a recommendation that all signage used in Judicial facilities be required to meet the State of Connecticut building code standards.
- Ms. Apple reported that the signage at JFK International Airport is primarily in English. By means of an online search, she discovered that most international airports have signage in their language plus English.
- Ms. Apple provided a sample PowerPoint presentation using photos with text to illustrate how the Subcommittee's findings could be presented. A suggestion was made that photos be linked to specific questions.
- The workgroup feels that the instructions that accompanied the Signage Assessment Checklist were easy to understand. The wording indicating that one checklist should be completed for each floor will be removed.
- If the photos taken by the Access to Facilities Committee are uploaded to SharePoint, a training session will be scheduled for the Committee members.
- Ms. Lugo Gines will notify the workgroup if a meeting needs to be scheduled to decide as a group on the changes made to the Signage Assessment Checklist.