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County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 500, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4069
(831) 454-2200 FAX: (831) 454-3262 TDD: (831) 454-2123

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AGENDA: 6/13/00

June 1, 2000

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON
DISABILITIES TO ELIMINATE THE USE OF THE TERM
"HANDICAPPED" IN VARIOUS COUNTY DOCUMENTS

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached is a letter from Andrea Smith, Coordinator of the County's Commission on Disabilities, conveying a series of recommendations from the Commission to phase out use of the term "handicapped" to describe persons with disabilities in County language and in documents produced by County departments now and in the future. Specifically, the Commission recommends use of the term "disability" when referring to people and use of the term "accessible" when referring to parking, bathrooms and buildings rather than the term "handicapped," which is wholly inappropriate and discriminatory.

As you will note, the Commission has identified three specific areas in which the use of this inappropriate terminology exists in County documents and further recommends that County departments be directed to use the terms "disability" and "accessible" as opposed to "handicapped" when revisions to current documents are undertaken or new documents are created.

I share the Commission's concern that the County not utilize terminology which is offensive or damaging to anyone in any way. Accordingly, I recommend that the Board take the following actions:

1. Direct the Planning Department to include revisions to County Code Sections 13.10.265, 13.10.554, 13.20.150, 14.02.020 and 15.02.180 as part of the department's 2000-01 work plan.

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June 1, 2000

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2. Direct the Personnel Department to revise job titles and job descriptions for three County positions entitled "Therapists for the Physically Handicapped" (Job Codes PP4, PP5, and PP7) on or before September 12, 2000.
3. Direct County Counsel to prepare an ordinance amending County Code Sections 2.72.010 through 2.72.060, relating to the Commission on Disabilities, based on the example provided by the Commission, and return the revised ordinance to the Board on or before August 1, 2000.
4. Direct the County Administrative Officer to communicate to department heads the Board's direction that County departments no longer utilize the term "handicapped" in the development of any written documents and to ensure that as existing documents are revised, the use of this term is removed and replaced with the terms "disability" or "accessible," as appropriate.

Sincerely,

MARDI WORMHOUDT, Chair
Board of SupervisorsMW:ted
Attachmentscc: County Administrative Officer
Planning Director
Personnel Director
County Counsel
Commission on Disabilities

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COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

Email commissions@co.santa-cruz.ca.us
 Website: www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us

701 Ocean Street, Room 30, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
 ph# 831-454-2355 fax# 831-454-2433

May 30, 2000

Chair Mardi Wormhoudt
 Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
 701 Ocean Street
 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Chair Wormhoudt:

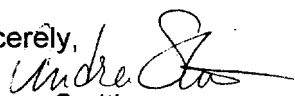
For years, society has inappropriately used the term "handicap" interchangeably with "disability" when referring to persons with disabilities. The term "handicap" originated many years ago to describe the act of using a cap (hat) to collect handouts. Describing people with disabilities using this term is not only inaccurate; it's extremely damaging. Words are very powerful in shaping the attitudes and perception of the public and portraying people with disabilities in this negative manner leads to stereotyping and discrimination. We recommend that the term "disability" be used when referring to people, and that "accessible" be used when referring to parking, bathrooms, and buildings.

Unfortunately, the term "handicapped" is found in some official County documents. The Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities requests that the term "handicap" no longer be used to describe persons with disabilities in County language and that all County materials produced now and in the future reflect this correction. We recognize that to review and amend all existing County language would be a monumental task so we request that the following documents be revised:

1. Direct the Planning Department to prepare ordinance revisions in Volume II of the County Code as part of the Departments 2000-01 work plan (Sections 13.10.265, 13.10.554, 13.20.150, 14.02.020, and 15.02.180).
2. Direct the Personnel Department to revise job titles for three County positions that read "Therapists for the Physically Handicapped" (Job Codes PP4, PP5, and PP7).
3. Direct County Counsel to amend the County ordinance pertaining to the Commission, sections 2.72.010 through 2.72.060, to read as the example attached.
4. Direct all County Departments to use the terms "disability" and "accessible" rather than "handicapped" in the development of future documents or the revision of current documents.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter. Please feel free to contact the Commission should you require any further information on this issue.

Sincerely,


 Andrea Smith

Commission on Disabilities Coordinator

cc: Susan Mauriello, CAO

Chapter 2.72

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Sections:

2.72.010	Definitions
2.72.20	Established – Statutory authority
2.72.030	Membership
2.72.040	Term of office
2.72.050	Organization and procedures
2.72.060	Powers and duties

2.72.010 Definitions.

The following words and phrases, whenever used in this chapter, shall have the meaning set forth in this section:

- A. ~~“Handicapped Person with a disability”~~ means any individual who, by reason of illness, injury, age congenital malfunction of other permanent or temporary physical incapacity or disability, is unable, without special facilities or special planning or design, to utilize public facilities such as buildings, sidewalks, public transportation and services effectively as persons who are not so affected.
- B. ~~“Severely handicapped person”~~
~~“Person with a severe disability”~~ means those who, without the use of a mechanical device or assistance (person), would face the threat of institutionalization or confinement to bed. (Prior code §3.65.030: Ord. 2744, 8/14/79)

2.72.020 Established-Statutory authority

The commission on disabilities is established under the authority of Government Code Section 31000.1 (Ord. 3875 §1, 1987: prior code §3.65.010: Ord. 2744, 8/14/79)

2.72.030 Membership

The commission shall consist of ten voting members, residents of the county, appointed by the board of supervisors in the following manner:

- A. Each supervisor shall nominate one person, who may reside within the supervisor's district and who is a ~~severely handicapped person with a severe disability~~, to serve on the commission;
- B. Each supervisor shall nominate one person who may reside within the supervisor's district and who is either ~~handicapped has a disability~~ or ~~is~~ a member of the immediate family of a ~~handicapped person with a disability~~ to serve on the commission;
- C. The superintendent of the local State Department of Rehabilitation, or his/her designee, shall serve as an ex officio member of the commission without a vote. (Prior code § 3.65.040: Ord. 2744, 8/14/79)

2.72.040 Term of office.

Each member shall serve for a term of four years, commencing on April 1st of the year in which such member's appointing supervisor begins a full term. (Prior code § 3.65050: Ord. 2744, 8/14/79)

2.72.050 Organization and procedures.

- A. General Organization. The commission shall comply in all respects with Sections 2.38.110 through 2.38.250 of the Santa Cruz County Code, unless otherwise provided herein.
- B. County Staff. The commission's coordinator shall provide staff support for the commission. The commission's coordinator shall serve as the administrative secretary, and shall receive copies of all reports and recommendations submitted to the board of supervisors, prepare and mail the agendas, take minutes at each meeting, and perform other duties as directed by the commission. The coordinator shall be selected by the county administrative officer who shall consult with the commission

concerning the selection. (Prior code sec. §3.65.060: Ord. 2744, 8/14/79)

2.72.060 Powers and duties.

The commission shall exercise the following responsibilities in its efforts to serve the **handicapped persons with disabilities** of this county:

- A. Review existing county policies that affect **handicapped persons with disabilities** and make recommendations to the board of supervisors regarding any proposed changes;
- B. Review Sections 503 and 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act and its implementing regulations and advise the Board of Supervisors on any actions necessary to bring the county into compliance with the federal requirements to eliminate discrimination against **handicapped persons with disabilities**;
- C. Review the provision of access for **handicapped persons with disabilities** to public places within the county and recommend improvements where needed;
- D. Review the county's **affirmative action equal employment opportunity** plan and policies, and recommend to the board of supervisors and **affirmative action equal employment opportunity** commission any revisions which may be necessary to eliminate employment discrimination against **handicapped persons with disabilities**;
- E. Review the county's personnel rules and job descriptions, and make recommendations to the board of supervisors, and to the civil services commission as necessary to assure that any unnecessary barriers to employment of **handicapped persons with disabilities** are removed;
- F. Advise the Board of Supervisors on any other appropriate programs and

actions, which would increase employment opportunities for **handicapped persons with disabilities**.

- G. Evaluate services provided to **handicapped persons with disabilities** in the county and make recommendations to the board of supervisors based on their conclusions;
- H. Review requests by **handicapped persons with disabilities** or organizations for county assistance, and advise the board of supervisors on appropriate actions;
- I. Investigate citizen complaints related to **handicapped persons concerns of persons with disabilities** and recommend appropriate actions to the board of supervisors;
- J. Review federal and state legislation of interest to **handicapped persons with disabilities** and advise the board of supervisors of their recommendation; and
- K. Exercise other responsibilities related to the needs and concerns of **handicapped persons with disabilities** in the county. (Prior code §3.65020: Ord. 2744, 8/14/79)