

**ADANN SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT**  
**Research Brief: Understanding Regional Context**  
**REGION 7 Great Plains ADA Center**



**Background**

The Spanish Language Outreach Project (SLO) is a new five-year collaborative national initiative of the ADA National Network (ADANN), ten regional ADA Centers, and the ADA Knowledge Translation Center. The first stage of the SLO project (2022-2023) aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the context of Spanish-speaking communities and assess their ADA-related information needs through research and expert consultation nationally and within each of the ten regions.

**Region 7 Summary**

Region 7 includes the states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. As of 2021, largest minority group in the region was Hispanic and Latinos with a population of 1 million people. In each state, more than 9% of the Hispanic population had a disability.

**Data and Methods**

Using a participatory process, the project team identified community members and conducted semi-structured interviews. Participants interviewed included 3 community members, all in Missouri. Most of the participants were male and had minimal knowledge about the ADA. Community members were associated with education and housing services with each having roles such as CEO, union representative, and parent education coordinator.

**Findings and Key Highlights**

In Region 7, language barriers include a lack of information in Spanish as well as translation or interpretation services. Additionally, having a representative of the community, or someone that community members can trust is an important element when offering information and services to the community. Participants also shared that a lack of knowledge about disability in state and local organizations is a barrier for the Spanish-speaking community as these organizations do not have the tools to guide people in the community when their rights might be violated.

**Barriers**

Translation and interpretation services  
 Lack of trust  
 Lack of awareness  
 Lack of awareness about disability rights

*"We work with the Spanish community every day and we are horrible at it because we do not have an onsite interpreter or someone to do home visits. 1 in 5 of the people we serve are Spanish speakers. We have to get an interpreter on the phone and that is difficult."*

*"With declining cuts in education, and less and less people going into being teachers, and less and less native Spanish speakers going into being teachers. It is a big fear that those communities are going to suffer from less and less resources. I think there was a lot of informal work done by an older generation that is not going to get passed on anymore."*

**Access to Information**

Social media  
 Specific organizations  
 Radio  
 Other

*"Flea markets, events in the TV, offer services and offer information to the community."*

**Recommendations**

Recommendations include increased awareness, more material in Spanish, better accessibility to websites and phones, and partnering with local organizations. Specific strategies included:

- Proactive awareness
- More material in Spanish
- Partnerships with community leaders
- Improve accessibility

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