

ADANN SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT
Research Brief: Understanding Regional Context
REGION 9 Pacific 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 9 Summary

Region 9 includes the states of Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Pacific Basin Territories of American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. As of 2021 the minority population made up approximately 58.2% of the region's population with the largest minority group being Hispanic and Latinos at 18.9 million. In each state, more than 9% of the Hispanic population had a disability.

Findings and Key Highlights

In Region 9, language barriers include the lack of professionals who can provide services to the community, lack of accessibility to the information provided, lack of information in Spanish, and low quality of translation and interpretation services. Also, a lack of trust in state and federal entities which is related to the fear of being deported or rejected lead to less access to services and support for the community. The community also reported being unaware of their rights, and even if they might know something about them, advocating for them can be challenging, making it a barrier. Last, after COVID-19 technology was a barrier to access information.

Data and Methods

Using a participatory process, the project team identified community members and conducted semi-structured interviews. Participants interviewed included 7 community members: 6 in California and 1 in Arizona. Most participants were female and had minimal knowledge about the ADA. Community members were associated with community resource centers, independent living centers or consultant services with each having roles such as community advocate, ADA coordinator, and person with a disability among others.

Barriers

- Lack of information in Spanish
- Lack of accessible information
- Bilingual staff
- Translation and interpretation services
- Fear
- Lack of trust
- Lack of information about rights
- Technology

"One of the biggest issues is access to public services, in California you can get some services even if you are undocumented, but people are scared so they do not come for those services."

"It's been hard to navigate my rights, and how to get them protected. I have service animals, and the process of getting my dogs certified, getting the letter from psychiatrist, the process of understanding my rights with landlords, it's been difficult! There is not enough information, not good enough to go and advocate for myself."

Access to Information

- Social media
- Word of mouth
- Radio

"Social media is very important to communicate with the Spanish speaking community, especially Facebook and Instagram."

Recommendations

Recommendations include more training in the community, increase participation in events, more educational sessions, and using different forms of communication. Specific strategies included:

- Train the trainer programs for community leaders
- Participate in events and partner with leaders in the community
- Educate the community, including information on ADA
- Add other forms of communication such as a newsletter

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CONTACT:

Pacific ADA Center – Region 9
 Website: <https://www.adapacific.org/>
 Email: adatech@adapacific.org
 Phone: 510-831-6714

ADA National Network
 Website: <https://adata.org/>
 Email: <https://adata.org/email>
 Phone: 1-800-949-4232