

ADANN SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT
Research Brief: Understanding Regional Context
REGION 10 Northwest 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 10 Summary

Region 10 includes the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. As of 2021, the population is approximately 14.4 million people, with 13.3% identifying as Hispanic or Latino. In each state, more than 8% 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 2 community member: 1 in Washington and 1 in Idaho. One participant was female and one was male. One participant had some knowledge about the ADA. Both interviews were conducted in English and both community members were program coordinators for different organizations.

Findings and Key Highlights

In Region 10, language barriers included a lack of information in Spanish, bilingual and bicultural staff, interpretation and translation services, and cultural competency. Lack of trust in state and federal government to ask questions and/or apply for benefits was also connected to the fear that Latinos/Hispanics feel concerning their immigration status and the fear of being deported. Additionally, there is a lack of knowledge about services and programs for the community which is related to being unfamiliar with the system. In terms of disability, the Spanish-speaking community is not familiar with the ADA, which also becomes a barrier for understanding that they have rights. In this community, disability and mental health carry a significant stigma that does not allow people to accept and access some of the services. Last, discrimination and technology were expressed as barriers. For older generations, accessing different websites, links, platforms, or meetings is not easy, representing a barrier preventing them from accessing information.

Barriers

Lack of information in Spanish
 Lack of bilingual staff
 Translation and interpretation services
 Literacy levels
 Fear
 Lack of awareness
 Lack of information about rights
 Stigma
 Discrimination
 Technology

“It can be very dangerous if you don’t understand the language. Not just the vocabulary, also the vernacular, the jargon. It is important to distinguish where the person is from because someone from Guatemala and Mexico will have different vocabulary.”

“If there isn’t this trust with the government and resources, then there is a fear to go and apply for them.”

“I think the ADA has not been helpful, not because of what it stands. It has not been helpful because the Latino community lacks access to it historically... I don’t think many in the Latino community, and I may be generalizing, don’t have knowledge of the ADA or what it stands for. They know there are laws, and services that some people get, but don’t know how to get it.”

“We notice that it is hard, for members of the Latin community to access anything that has a website or a link. Often, they come to the offices to apply for services.”

Access to Information

Social media
 Word of mouth
 Radio

“The Latino community. The easiest way to access information is the Spanish radio stations. Often, they are a way to a statewide audience. Facebook is a popular way of distributing information.”

Recommendations

Recommendations include training to the community, education on disability, state specific information, increase participation in events, partnering with local organizations and using different ways to reach the community. Specific strategies included:

- Education and training for the community and staff in organizations
- State tailed information for the community
- Increasing participation in community events
- Partnering with local organizations
- Using different ways to deliver information such as podcasts

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