

VIRGINIA'S JUDICIAL SYSTEM

Notice Regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and Requests for Accommodations by Persons with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was enacted to ensure that all qualified individuals with disabilities enjoy the same opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. The ADA directly affects state courts as providers of public programs and services. In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq., the Supreme Court of Virginia and the courts of the Commonwealth of Virginia (collectively referred to as "Virginia's Judicial System") will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities.

Virginia's Judicial System does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with all regulations promulgated by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under Title I of the ADA.

Effective Communication: Virginia's Judicial System will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in Virginia's Judicial System programs, services, and activities, including qualified interpreters, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures: Virginia's Judicial System will make all reasonable modification to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its programs, services, and activities. For example, individuals with service animals are welcomed in Virginia's courts, even where pets are generally prohibited.

Requests for Accommodation: A request for accommodation should be made to the relevant clerk if the request relates to a pending case or activity of a particular court. Otherwise, the request should be made to the ADA Coordinator at the address below. Procedures for making a request, as well as a form for doing so, are available through the ADA Coordinator and on Virginia's Judicial System website, www.vacourts.gov.

No requirement to alter programs and services: The ADA does not require Virginia's Judicial System to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services or impose an undue financial or administrative burden.

Complaints regarding accessibility: *Complaints concerning a program, service, or activity of a circuit court clerk's office should be directed to that clerk.* Other complaints will be handled pursuant to grievance procedures adopted by the Office of the Executive Secretary. The procedures are available through the ADA Coordinator, and on Virginia's Judicial System website, www.vacourts.gov.

No surcharge: Virginia's Judicial System will not place a surcharge on a particular individual with a disability or any group of individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy, such as retrieving items from locations that are open to the public but are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs.

Questions about this Notice – Please submit your questions to: ADA Coordinator
Renée Fleming Mills, Ph.D.
Office of the Executive Secretary
Supreme Court of Virginia
100 N. 9th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
Fax: 804-786-0109
E-mail: ADAOffice@vacourts.gov