

MEMORANDUM 2025-40

**Terminology Relating to Persons with Disabilities
(Status Report)**

In 2024, the Commission¹ was directed by the Legislature² to study and recommend consistent and comprehensive nonsubstantive replacement of the terms “dependent adult” and “dependent person” throughout California codes, with new terms describing the defined persons, which include people with disabilities, “in a respectful way.”³

As part of the assigned study, the Commission was also directed to convene and obtain input from a working group composed of representatives from the state protection and advocacy agency⁴ and the California Department of Social Services, as well as persons and groups representing persons described by the current definitions of “dependent adults” and “dependent persons.”⁵

SECOND WORKING GROUP MEETING

The staff convened a second working group meeting on August 22, 2025.⁶ The goal for the meeting was to continue to work toward a majority recommendation on replacement terms the working group believes would best comply with the legislative directive, which would then be submitted to the Commission for its consideration.

The following entities have participated in at least one of the working group meetings to date:

Association of Regional Center Agencies
California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform
California Council of the Blind

¹ Any California Law Revision Commission document referred to in this memorandum can be obtained from the Commission. Recent materials can be downloaded from the Commission’s website (www.clrc.ca.gov). Other materials can be obtained by contacting the Commission’s staff.

The Commission welcomes written comments at any time during its study process. Any comments received will be a part of the public record and may be considered at a public meeting. However, comments that are received less than five business days prior to a Commission meeting may be presented without staff analysis.

² [2024 Cal. Stat. ch. 233](#) (AB 1906, Gipson).

³ Gov’t Code § [8290.7\(c\)\(4\)](#).

⁴ Disability Rights California.

⁵ Gov’t Code § [8290.7\(c\)\(1\), \(2\)](#).

⁶ The meetings are publicly noticed, and minutes and video recordings of each meeting are available on the [study page](#) of the Commission’s website.

California Department of Developmental Services
California Department of Rehabilitation
California Department of Social Services
California Department on Aging
California Disability Services Organization
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers
California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association
Californians for Disability Rights
Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy, and Innovation
Disability Rights California
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Disability Voices United
Educate Advocate
Justice in Aging
Office of Statewide Clinical Services
Reach San Diego
State Council on Developmental Disabilities
Statewide Disability Advisory Council
The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy California Collaboration (AB 1906 bill sponsor)
The Arc of California
USC Center for Elder Justice

The second meeting continued a spirited and helpful discussion, with arguments made in support of and against suggested replacement terms.⁷ No consensus on appropriate replacement terms was achieved, but there appeared to be a narrowing of possible choices.

NEXT STEPS

The staff believes a third and final meeting should result in substitute terms supported by a clear majority of the working group, which will then be presented to the Commission for its consideration at the December meeting.

In addition, following the Commission’s decision on appropriate replacement terms for those terms defined in current law, a second issue the Commission will then have to decide is how or whether to address the terms “dependent adult” and dependent person” in the codes that are not linked to any statutory definition.⁸

Based on the constraint in AB 1906 that the Commission’s final recommendation in this study not substantively change existing law, that second decision, when the time comes, could be as important as the recommendation the Commission ultimately makes

⁷ A list of terms considered at the meeting appears in the [Minutes](#) of the AB 1906 Working Group Meeting on August 22, 2025.

⁸ See Memorandum [2025-29](#), pp. 4-5, for an extended discussion of this topic.

relating to appropriate substitute terms.

Does the Commission have any questions or direction it wishes to offer the staff at this time?

Respectfully submitted,

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