

DRAFT MINUTES

**California Connect
Equipment Program Advisory Committee (EPAC) Meeting**

October 10, 2025

California Connect's (also known as the Deaf & Disabled Telecommunications Program) Equipment Program Advisory Committee (EPAC) held a hybrid public Committee Meeting on Webex and at the Oakland City Center, 500 12th Street, Suite 105, Oakland, CA 94607.

EPAC Members Present

Danyelle Cerillo, Blind/Low Vision Seat (Webex)
Janice Armigo Brown, Hard of Hearing Community Seat
Judy Viera, Deaf Community Seat (Webex)
Monique Harris, Mobility Impaired Seat
Steve Longo, Deaf Community Seat, Chair (Webex)

EPAC Members Absent

Antoinette Warren, Senior Citizen Community Seat, Vice Chair

EPAC Non-Voting Liaisons Present:

Brent Jolley, Communications Division, CPUC

CPUC Staff Present:

Matthew Reinig, Committee Coordinator, Communications Division
Tyrone Chin, Communications Division (WebEx)
Karen Luong, Communications Division (WebEx)
Darren Blackburn, Public Advocate's Office (WebEx)
Charles Abeghe, Communications Division (WebEx)

Others Present on WebEx:

Amanda Whyrick, California Connect Division President
Chong Vang, Equipment Processing Center Operations Director, CSD
Jennifer Minore, Field Operations Program Director, CSD
Matthew Myrick, Testing and Training Director, CSD
Aida Cerda, Outreach Director, CSD
Melissa McMahan, Programs Manager, Hamilton Relay
Molly Miller, Marketing Director, CSD
Loulia Miller, Maximus

Erin Anhouvy, RAID Manager, Maximus
Abby Magtoto, Relay Services Account Manager, Hamilton Relay
5122****43
AS
Amit Chhabra
Antonio Serna
Ashley Gutierrez
Bartulo, Christopher
Captioner-Brenda Perin
Dan Mabashov
Katie Wright
Leigh Ann Hubbard
Lori Savageau, Maximus
Melody Lujano
Michael Warburton
RH
Riva Usher
Roger Pflieger
Ryan
Sam
Sam M
Starr

I. Administrative Business

A. Roll Call of EPAC Members

EPAC Chair Steve Longo performed a roll call at 10:05 A.M. Antoinette Warren was absent.

B. Agenda Review and Approval

Moved by Judith Viera, seconded by Monique Harris, and with no opposition, the Agenda was approved, as stated.

C. Approval of EPAC Meeting Minutes from September 12, 2025

Judith Viera provided corrections to the meeting minutes. Moved by Judith Viera and seconded by Janice Armigo Brown, the minutes were approved as corrected.

D. EPAC Action Items from September 12, 2025

No Action items at this time.

II. California Connect/DDTP Update

1 Tyrone Chin provided updates on the Public Participation Hearings,
2 PPCA, ERP, EPC, CRS-6 RFP, and staffing updates.

3
4 **Public Participation Hearings (PPH):** A Public Participation Hearing
5 took place in the Greater Los Angeles area on September 3, 2025, with two
6 sessions: one at 2:00 p.m. had no public commenters, and another at 6:00
7 p.m. that featured two comments. The next Public Participation Hearing was
8 on September 17, 2025, at the Ed Roberts Campus, following an educational
9 session aimed at preparing participants to provide meaningful input. Outreach
10 efforts were coordinated by the Center for Independent Living (CIL) aim to
11 increase attendance. The turnout during the afternoon session was
12 noteworthy, with nearly 30 attendees with disabilities, nine providing
13 comments in person and another 20 participating remotely. The comments
14 were helpful, since they were germane to the session issues. The evening
15 session had two people providing comments.

16
17 **Primary and Program Contract Administrator (PPCA):** CPUC
18 approved the purchase requests for equipment for testing and orders are
19 currently underway.

20
21 **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP):** The Communications Division
22 continues to work on the Request for Proposal.

23
24 **Equipment Processing center (EPC):** The Communications Division
25 continues to work on the Request for Proposal.

26
27 **CRS-6 RFP update:** The Communications Division continues to work
28 with the California Department of Technology on the CRS-6 RFP.

29 30 **III. Katie's Presentation as a COLR Panelist**

31 Katie Wright presented, and the presentation is on pages 19 to 34.
32 The conversation centers on concerns about the compatibility of
33 speakerphones and other essential devices with Voice over Internet Protocol
34 (VoIP) services, especially during power or internet outages. Monique Harris
35 raises questions about whether speakerphones that require landlines are
36 being considered among devices that may not work with VoIP. Katie Wright
37 and Brent Jolley acknowledge the need for further clarification and express
38 intent to investigate whether these devices will be supported or need to be
39 listed as incompatible. Other participants discuss the broader implications of
40 relying on VoIP, including the unreliability of broadband compared to
41 traditional copper wires and the difficulty in maintaining aging landline

1 infrastructure. Amanda Whyrick adds that there are options for connecting
2 external speakers and backup battery packs but notes that internet outages
3 remain a significant risk. The group agrees to follow up on specific technical
4 questions and to consider how these changes could impact users, their
5 families, and their jobs.

6 Steve Longo highlighted Bluetooth's limited range and suggested that
7 the committee consider advocating for reliable and affordable COLR
8 replacement services, emphasizing that current protocols should remain until
9 viable alternatives are available. Amanda Whyrick pointed out that wired
10 options exist for external speakers and stressed the value of testing devices to
11 identify gaps in community needs. Janice Armigo Brown and Katie Wright
12 agreed on the importance of preparing for future rule changes by evaluating
13 and listing suitable devices in advance to avoid disruptions in communication
14 for those reliant on landlines.

15 Monique Harris shared concerns about internet-based phones failing
16 during outages, underscoring the necessity of copper wire Speakerphones for
17 emergency use. Danyelle Cerillo raised the issue of training older adults and
18 people with disabilities on new devices if copper lines were phased out,
19 supporting the need for committee-led device testing and training.
20 Judy Viera inquired about the relevance of ADA requirements, to which Katie
21 Wright replied that accessibility considerations are central to the process. If
22 modernization cannot meet ADA standards, maintaining copper lines remains
23 necessary.

24 25 **IV. Public Input – AM Session**

26 27 **V. Lunch Break**

28 29 **VI. Program Vendor Reports**

30 31 **A. Marketing Report**

32 Molly Miller, Marketing Director, reported on Marketing updates. The
33 presentation is on pages 35 to 43.

34 Monique Harris reported not seeing any content from California Connect
35 on Facebook, despite assurances that material had been posted there. Molly
36 Miller clarified whether Harris was referring to specific videos or Facebook
37 posts in general. Harris confirmed she meant all types of posts. Miller
38 responded by explaining that California Connect posts both ads and organic
39 content on Facebook regularly and suggested Harris adjust her Facebook
40 settings to prioritize the organization's posts for better visibility.

1
2 **B. Testing and Training Report**

3 Matt Myrick, Testing and Training Director, reported on Testing &
4 Training updates. The presentation is on pages 44 to 52.

5 Steve Longo emphasized the importance of sharing testing results and
6 encouraged participants to use surveys for feedback or concerns, highlighting
7 the need for all items to reach their proper destinations. Matthew assured
8 attendees that deliveries would be made without issue and provided updates
9 on the device selection and ordering process, explaining that Wave 2 devices
10 had been chosen and would ship within two to three months after CPUC
11 approval. He also indicated efforts to streamline the delivery and feedback
12 process.

13 Monique Harris inquired about the shipping timeline and device selection
14 process. Danyelle Cerillo asked whether separate surveys would be provided
15 for each device and if participants needed to notify anyone about keeping or
16 returning devices. Matthew responded that surveys would be streamlined but
17 tailored by device type when necessary, with feedback reviewed by the testing
18 team to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Matthew Reinig further clarified
19 the survey process, and Matthew confirmed that each device would likely
20 have its own assessment due to differing user experiences, though the
21 process would be as efficient as possible.
22

23 **C. Field Operations Report**

24 Jennifer Minore, Field Operations Director, presented, and the
25 presentation is on page 53 to 61.

26 Steve Longo asked for clarification regarding a category on Page 58 of
27 the report about Service Center visits, specifically concerning equipment
28 returns by customers who were moving out of state or no longer participating.
29 Jennifer Minore explained that the category includes those who voluntarily
30 return equipment for various reasons, not just relocation, and highlighted the
31 value of gathering feedback to improve program offerings (such as adding
32 accessories for smartphones).

33 Judy Viera requested details about the number and distribution of full-time
34 and part-time Service Centers in California. Jennifer Minore responded that
35 there are fourteen full-time centers and one part-time center in Fresno, with
36 plans for additional part-time locations in Los Angeles and Berkeley. Judy
37 asked for a list of locations to be shared with organization members, which
38 Jennifer agreed to send via Matt, along with an updated map reflecting recent
39 changes. The session concluded with Steve Longo inviting further questions
40 from participants.
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2 **D. Outreach Report**

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4 Aida Cerda, Outreach Director, presented, and the report is on page 62 to
5 72.
6

7 **E. California Relay Service (CRS) Report**

8 Abby Magtoto, Relay Account Manager, presented, and the presentation
9 is on page 73 to 76.

10 Judy Viera inquired about the availability of brochures prior to CRS and
11 their potential distribution to organization members, especially those who are
12 late-deafened and accustomed to using the telephone. Abby Magtoto
13 confirmed that marketing materials were available and asked for shipping
14 details, suggesting coordination with Matt for distribution. Matthew Reinig
15 offered to receive the materials and distribute them to the team, particularly to
16 Judy, to ensure everyone receives the information.
17

18 **F. Equipment Processing Center (EPC) Customer Contact Report**

19 Chong Vang, EPC Operations Director, presented and the presentation
20 is on page 77 to 85.

21 Steve Longo inquired about the top five pieces of equipment, specifically
22 clarifying whether a Panasonic device was a phone. Chong Vang confirmed it
23 was a cordless phone. Longo then questioned whether the distribution list
24 would change if equipment needed replacement or if there was a transition
25 away from copper landlines. Vang explained that there are currently no plans
26 to replace the Panasonic phone, which is popular and well-received among
27 users. He added that any potential upgrades would likely be evaluated by the
28 testing and training team.

29 Janice Armigo Brown expressed concerns about the transition from
30 copper to digital phone lines, particularly for individuals in rural areas who rely
31 on copper lines. She questioned what alternatives will be available when
32 copper lines are phased out and suggested that phones at California Connect
33 offices should be clearly labeled as digital or analog to help customers
34 understand their options. Brown also asked for confirmation that most phones
35 offered through California Connect are compatible with digital lines. Chong
36 Vang and Jennifer Minore responded by noting that some analog phones can
37 be used with digital lines through converters, and that most equipment now
38 functions on digital lines. Minore explained that Service Centers provide
39 information about phone compatibility and that staff are preparing educational
40 materials to help the public navigate the transition. These materials, currently

1 under review, will clearly outline which phones work with which types of lines
2 and address concerns about emergency use and compatibility.

3
4 **VII. Public Input – PM Session**

5 There was no public input at this time.

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7 **VIII. New Business**

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9 **A. Nomination and Voting of Successors or New Members (if**
10 **necessary)**

11 Steve Longo encouraged members to recruit new members for the open
12 seats.

13
14 **B. Future Meetings and Agendas**

15 The next meeting will be on November 14, 2025 in Los Angeles.

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17 **C. Report from the Chairs**

18 No reports.

19
20 **D. Member Reports**

21 No reports.

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23 **IX. Meeting Wrap up and Adjournment**

24 The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 PM.

25
26 Matthew Reinig prepared these minutes.