

Letter: Blindness is a Disability, Too!

February 26, 2025



Hello my name is Michael Bruno and I'm a disabled person. I moved to Crescent City in 2016 to care for my elderly mother, leaving my job and profession in Southern California.

I hired an attorney who I told about my disabilities before I was even served any paperwork.

Del Norte Law Court services and the Superior Court Clerk's office are ill-equipped to handle services for people with disabilities.

One of my jobs in Southern California was to advocate for people with disabilities, and I would just like to share my story to improve services for those who are in need.

I had to fight with the clerk's office to gain access to attempt to have accessible documents for me however; it was four years too late.

I literally had to demand to talk to the manager of the clerk's office, who indicated that they had no one in that department to help people who are blind or visually impaired.

This is not acceptable.

Thanks to technology, there's no reason why attorneys judges courts can't provide alternative documentation for people with disabilities.

Due to my blindness which occurred in 1974, there were no technologies at that time to help me get through high school, so my reading abilities are limited and considered illiterate and dyslexic.

I asked the opposing attorneys office law firm to please send me alternative documents, and the office was uncooperative.

I'm considered a blind person with high functions, but reading is not something I can do to a normal format of print.

My attorney let me know after four years of waiting to show my evidence that I was unable to share any of my evidence.

That is when I demanded the manager at the clerk's office to grant me access to my file.

However, four years have gone by and there were so much to read I was unable to keep up, and I had my daughter help to find out what exactly was going on.

I understand Crescent City is a small town; everybody knows everybody else. However, I came to here to care for my Mother.

The need for legal services occurred in 2019 and cost me \$13,000. I was not treated fairly by my attorney or the Court because of my disabilities.

On the positive side, Rite Aid and Tri-County Bank have turned on their audio buttons on their cash ATM machines so a blind person can hear that a button is being pressed. It might be annoying for those with Vision but people who can't see need to hear.

In Southern California, one of my students was called for jury duty, and the court had her come in two weeks before the hearing just to learn where to go in the court room where people sat who would be there.

None of these things were provided to me in Del Norte County.

I received no accommodation from the opposing attorney from the clerk's office, nor either of the three judges who served over me.

It is not easy for a disabled person to get employment, but I have volunteered every week since my mother's death at three organizations here in Crescent City to help those in need.

Thank you for your time.

Tax paying resident,

Michael Bruno

Crescent City

