

U.S. Attorney's Office-Jefferson County Reach ADA Settlement to Ensure Polling Place Access

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Alabama today announced a settlement with Jefferson County under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act to improve physical accessibility at the county's polling places for individuals who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids, and for individuals who are blind or have vision impairments.

"The right to vote is the foundation of our democracy," said U.S. Attorney Joyce White Vance. "With today's agreement, Jefferson County makes a commitment to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities to exercise their right to vote in person at their assigned polling place, just like their neighbors."

Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by a state or local government in any of its programs or services, including its voting program. The ADA requires public entities, such as Jefferson County, to select and use polling places that are accessible. Jefferson County is working collaboratively with the U.S. Attorney's Office to make all polling places accessible. Under the terms of the settlement agreement, the county will use an evaluation form for each current and prospective polling place based on ADA architectural standards. The settlement requires the county to either relocate inaccessible polling places to new, accessible facilities, or to use temporary measures such as portable ramps, signs, traffic cones and doorbells, where appropriate, to ensure accessibility on Election Day.

Those interested in finding out more about the ADA can access the ADA website at www.ada.gov. To make complaints about potential civil-rights violations, including complaints about discrimination based on race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status, please call or e-mail the U.S. Attorney's Office Civil Rights Intake Specialist at (205)244-2178 or usaaln.civilrights@usdoj.gov. To file a written complaint, mail the complaint to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Alabama, 1801 Fourth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.