



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DECEMBER 18, 2009**

**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
YUSILL SCRIBNER,  
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL,  
JANICE OH  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
(212) 637-2600**

**DOJ  
ALEJANDRO MIYAR  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
(202) 514-2007**

**TOWN OF LEWISBORO SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED  
STATES TO ENSURE CIVIC ACCESS FOR PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and THOMAS E. PEREZ, the Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice, announced today that the United States has entered into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (the "Agreement") with the Town of Lewisboro, New York ("Lewisboro"), to improve access to all aspects of civic life in Lewisboro for persons with disabilities, thus concluding an investigation into Lewisboro's compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act (the "ADA"). The investigation began with a Complaint filed by a resident of Lewisboro that civic facilities did not comply with the ADA.

The Agreement was reached under "Project Civic Access," a Department of Justice initiative to bring state and local governments into compliance with the ADA. Project Civic Access was initiated in the 1990s to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in civic life. As part of the project, investigators, attorneys, and architects at the Department of Justice surveyed state and local government facilities and programs in various locations throughout the country to identify modifications to programs and facilities necessary to comply with ADA requirements. Depending on the circumstances in each community, the agreements address specific areas where access can be improved.

Lewisboro is located in Westchester County in New York. It has approximately 18,000 residents and offers a variety of public services, including a library and numerous parks and recreational facilities. Under the Agreement, Lewisboro will:

- Make physical modifications to the Onatru Farmhouse, a building that houses many of Lewisboro's offices, so that parking, routes into the building, entrance, restrooms, service counters and offices on the second floor of the building are accessible to people with disabilities;
- Prepare and implement a plan for making physical modifications to, or providing alternative means for delivering services at, Lewisboro's other public buildings and facilities so that the programs or services offered at those buildings and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities;
- Adopt a policy for handling grievances regarding Lewisboro's compliance with the ADA;
- Appoint ADA Coordinators to assist people with disabilities in accessing programs and services offered by Lewisboro and handle grievances regarding ADA compliance;
- Modify its personnel policies to ensure that Lewisboro will not discriminate against employees or prospective employees on the basis of disability and will offer reasonable accommodation to employees or prospective employees with disabilities;
- Adopt policies or procedures to ensure that Lewisboro's police department communicates effectively with people who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- Ensure that Lewisboro's communication practices, including its official Web site, is accessible to persons with disabilities, including individuals who are blind or have low vision;
- Ensure equal access to all aspects of the county's emergency management programs for persons with disabilities, including emergency preparation, notification, evacuation, sheltering, response, and recovery; and
- Conduct a self-evaluation of all its programs and services to ensure that such programs and services are accessible to people with disabilities.

The Agreement was reached pursuant to Title II of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with

disabilities by state and local governments. The Agreement will remain in effect for three years or until the parties agree that all actions required by the Agreement have been completed, whichever is later.

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, said: "State and local governments must guarantee that their programs and services are equally accessible and comply with federal law. We are pleased that Lewisboro has recognized this need for their town and is working to ensure equal access to all of its residents and visitors with disabilities."

THOMAS E. PEREZ, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, said: "Project Civic Access is more about than just the ADA compliance, it is about ensuring that individuals with disabilities can expect the same access to civic programs, services, and facilities as everyone else. I commend city officials for making this commitment to provide equal access to city programs, activities, and services for all its residents."

Assistant United States Attorney LI YU is supervising the case. Those interested in finding out more about the ADA or the Department of Justice's Project Civic Access initiative can access the ADA home page at <http://www.ada.gov>, or call the toll-free ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

09-429

###