

# Bulletin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: HHS Office for Civil Rights, 1-800-368-1019

On January 29, 2015, the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ) and Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a joint letter finding disability rights violations by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF). DOJ found DCF has violated Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and HHS found DCF has violated Title II and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), by denying a mother with developmental disabilities the opportunity to benefit from supports and services following the removal of her two-day-old infant and over the next two years as she was seeking to reunify with her daughter.

The joint Letter of Findings is signed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta of the Civil Rights Division for the DOJ, and Director Jocelyn Samuels and Region I Regional Manager Susan M. Pezzullo Rhodes of the Office for Civil Rights of HHS. The joint Letter of Findings is available on OCR's website at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/activities/examples/Disability/index.html>.

For more general information on the Americans with Disabilities Act visit ADA.gov, or call the toll-free ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

The Office for Civil Rights of HHS enforces multiple civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, and religion by health care and human service providers. When OCR determines that there has been a violation of the law, OCR initially seeks voluntary compliance and provides technical assistance to health care and human service providers. OCR also has the authority to seek remedies as necessary in the event of noncompliance.

To learn more about non-discrimination and health information privacy laws, your civil rights and privacy rights in health care and human service settings, and to find information on how to file a complaint, visit us at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr>.