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Eastern District of Michigan

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**U.S. Attorney's Office Resolves ADA Investigation of
Ascension Providence Hospital and Related Medical Facility**

DETROIT, MI.— The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan has resolved its investigation into allegations that Ascension Providence Hospital and an Ascension-affiliated medical facility, Washington Primary Care, violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by denying patients with disabilities from bringing their service animals into their facilities, U.S. Attorney Dawn N. Ison announced today.

The agreement resolves two complaints received by the U.S. Attorney's Office. The first alleged that Ascension Providence Hospital refused to allow a service dog to accompany a patient with a disability into the pre- and post-operative areas of the hospital. The second alleged that a doctor at Washington Primary Care refused to allow a patient to bring her service dog into an examination room, demanded to see "paperwork" for the animals, and told the patient that she would not continue treatment if she insisted on bringing her service animal. At all times, both Ascension entities cooperated with the investigation, which was conducted by the U.S. Attorney's Office's Civil Rights Unit.

Under the resolution, Ascension agreed to revise its service animal policy and its non-discrimination policy applicable to all Ascension Michigan entities, and train its relevant staff on the new policies, including the need to conduct an individualized assessment before any service animal is excluded or prohibited from any area of an Ascension Providence Hospital or Washington Primary Care facility.

"The ADA protects the right of individuals who use a service animal for their disability to have their animal with them in virtually all areas, even in hospitals and medical offices. There is no requirement that they provide any documentation for entry and a person should never be denied health services simply because they use a service animal," said Dawn N. Ison, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. "We are pleased that Ascension shares the United States' commitment to ensuring the people with disabilities are able to fully access all needed medical care."

The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by hospitals and other health care providers. Among other things, the ADA requires doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers to make reasonable modifications in their policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to accommodate people with disabilities, including allowing service animals into their facilities. Enforcing the ADA is a top priority of the Civil Rights Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan. Those interested in finding out more about the obligations of hospitals and other health providers under the ADA may call the Department of Justice's toll-free ADA information line at 800-514-0301 or 800-514-0383(TDD), or access the ADA website at www.ada.gov. ADA complaints within the Eastern District of

Michigan can be made to the U.S. Attorney's Office Civil Rights Hotline at (313) 226- 9151 or usamie.civilrights@usdoj.gov.