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HUD ISSUES NOTICE ON ASSISTANCE ANIMALS AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

WASHINGTON –The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) today issued a notice reaffirming that housing providers must provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities who require assistance animals. The “Notice on Service Animals and Assistance Animals for People with Disabilities in Housing and HUD-Funded Programs” discusses how the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) intersect regarding the use of service or assistance animals by persons with disabilities.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits landlords from discriminating based on disability, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, and familial status. The ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and state and local government activities. Both laws contain provisions which address the use of service or assistance animals by people with disabilities. While the Fair Housing Act covers nearly all types of housing, some types of housing, such as public housing, are covered by both laws.

“The vital importance of assistance animals in reducing barriers, promoting independence, and improving the quality of life for people with disabilities should not be underestimated, particularly in the home,” said John Trasviña, HUD Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. “Disability-related complaints, including those that involve assistance animals, are the most common discrimination complaint we receive. This notice will help housing providers better understand and meet their obligation to grant reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities that require assistance animals to fully use and enjoy their housing.”

HUD's new notice explains housing providers' obligations under the Fair Housing Act, including the requirement to provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities who require assistance animals. Pet restrictions cannot be used to deny or limit housing to people with disabilities who require the use of an assistance animal because of their disability. Housing providers must grant reasonable accommodations in such instances, in accordance with the law. The guidance also describes the Department of Justice's revised definition of "service animal" under the ADA, as well as housing providers' obligations when multiple nondiscrimination laws apply.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires equal access for people with disabilities using trained service dogs in public accommodations and government facilities. Under the Fair Housing Act, housing providers have a further obligation to accommodate people with disabilities who, because of their disability, require trained service dogs or other types of assistance animals to perform tasks, provide emotional support, or alleviate the effects of their disabilities.

HUD's and the Department of Justice's [Joint Statement on Reasonable Accommodations](#) provides additional information regarding housing providers' obligations to provide reasonable accommodations. The Department of Justice has also published a [fact sheet](#) on service animals and the ADA.

Click here to read HUD's [new notice](#).

Persons who believe they have been denied a reasonable accommodation request may file a complaint by contacting HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 (voice) or (800) 927-9275 (TTY). Housing discrimination complaints may also be filed by going to www.hud.gov/fairhousing, or by downloading HUD's free housing discrimination mobile application, which can be accessed through Apple devices, such as the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

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HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.

HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes: utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at www.hud.gov and <http://espanol.hud.gov>. You can also follow HUD on twitter @HUDnews, on facebook at www.facebook.com/HUD, or sign up for news alerts on [HUD's News Listserv](#).