

***UNIVERSITY LEGAL SERVICES, INC.***  
*Protection and Advocacy Program*  
*for the District of Columbia*

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For immediate release

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**District of Columbia Settles Federal Law Suit on Behalf of Medicaid Beneficiaries**

Washington, D.C. – On January 26, 2009, the District agreed to remedy its illegal termination of Medicaid-funded van transportation services for thousands of indigent District residents by agreeing to restore their van transportation if they file an administrative appeal within 15 days. This ensures that Medicaid recipients with disabilities who need transportation to medical appointment will be able to access those services.

In August 2008, the District, through its contractor, Medical Transportation Management, Inc., summarily cut thousands of individuals' Medicaid-funded van transportation services, due to cost overruns in the contract. Many District residents with disabilities who relied on the service were left without a way to access their doctors, day treatment programs, and mental health services.

In September 2008, University Legal Services (ULS) and the National Health Law Program (NHLP) sued the District, challenging these terminations and asking a federal court to stop the termination of Medicaid benefits without notice and without a chance to challenge the decision to terminate benefits.

The District settled the lawsuit, agreeing to send a new notice to the affected recipients explaining their right to a hearing and how to get van services pending the outcome of the hearing. The District also agreed not to terminate any recipient's transportation in the future without complying with the law. Last, the District agreed to continued court oversight 90 days to ensure that the District provides the required notice.

"This settlement gives Medicaid recipients the voice Congress intended them to have," ULS Staff Attorney Jennifer Lav explained. "The District cannot side-step basic due process requirements and strand individuals without medical services simply because it entered into a poorly-planned contract."

About University Legal Services, Inc.

Since 1996, ULS, a private, non-profit organization, has been the federally mandated protection and advocacy (P&A) program for individuals with disabilities in the District of Columbia. ULS provides administrative and legal advocacy to protect the civil rights of

District residents with disabilities. ULS staff directly serves hundreds of individual clients annually, with thousands more benefiting from the results of investigations, institutional reform litigation, outreach and education.

About the National Health Law Program

NHeLP is a national public interest law firm that seeks to improve health care for America's working and unemployed poor, minorities, the elderly and people with disabilities. NHeLP serves legal services programs, community-based organizations, the private bar, providers and individuals who work to preserve a health care safety net for the millions of uninsured or underinsured low-income people.