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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Justice Department Settles with Sacramento, Calif., Public Library Authority Over Inaccessible “E-Reader” Devices

The Justice Department announced today that it and the National Federation of the Blind have reached a settlement with the Sacramento Public Library Authority in Sacramento, Calif., to remedy alleged violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The agreement resolves allegations that the library violated the ADA by using inaccessible Barnes & Noble NOOK electronic reader devices in a patron lending program.

Under the settlement agreement, the library will not acquire any additional e-readers for patron use that exclude persons who are blind or others with disabilities who need accessible features such as text-to-speech functions or the ability to access menus through audio or tactile options. The library has also agreed to acquire at least 18 e-readers that are accessible to persons with disabilities. The settlement agreement also requires the library to train its staff on the requirements of the ADA.

“Emerging technologies like e-readers are changing the way we interact with the world around us and we need to ensure that people with disabilities are not excluded from the programs where these devices are used,” said Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez.

“We are pleased that the Sacramento Public Library Authority worked so cooperatively to adopt measures that will allow patrons with disabilities to avail themselves equally of the library’s programs and services,” said U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of California, Benjamin B. Wagner.

The ADA protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination in the services, programs, or activities of state and local government entities. Under title II of the ADA, state and local governments must afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from aids, benefits, or services provided. For more information about the ADA, call the Department’s toll-free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (TDD 800-514-0383) or access the ADA website at www.ada.gov.

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Civil Rights Division