



**WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS & URBAN AFFAIRS**

For Immediate Release

**NATION'S LARGEST RESTAURANT CHAIN TO BE
MORE ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

WASHINGTON, DC, January 2, 2008 – Today, Subway – the largest restaurant chain in the country – has agreed to take serious steps to increase the accessibility of its restaurants to people with disabilities. These changes are the result of a settlement agreement reached between Subway and the Equal Rights Center, a non-profit civil rights organization located in Washington, DC. The settlement will require modifications to Subway restaurants located in Washington, DC, as well as corporate-wide changes to Subway operating procedures. The settlement represents a major advance for people with disabilities.

According to the settlement, Subway will eliminate significant barriers to wheelchair users and other people with disabilities at over fifty restaurants in the Washington, DC area. The modifications are intended to bring Subway restaurants and the services they provide into compliance with the requirements found in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Some of these changes include installing ramps at entrances that are currently obstructed, making entrances wide enough for people who use wheelchairs to pass through, and assuring that entrance doors can be opened by people with disabilities. In addition to making changes to its DC restaurants, Subway has agreed to revise its policies and procedures, including its process for selecting future restaurant sites, to be in compliance with the ADA. Subway has also agreed to make a payment of an undisclosed amount to plaintiffs in settlement of the case.

"We hope that this settlement will not only open Subway's doors to customers with disabilities, but that it will serve as an example to other business owners, showing them that removing barriers to comply with the ADA is not only a legal requirement, it is good business as well," said Rabbi Bruce E. Kahn, the Executive Director of the Equal Rights Center. He concluded, "Subway and the ERC will work cooperatively and enthusiastically to jointly realize all the accessibility benefits this agreement envisions."

In July of 2007, Subway reached a federal settlement agreement with the Department of Justice, wherein Subway agreed to assist its franchisees in conducting surveys of the franchise restaurants across the country and provide guidance on the steps that each shop must take to be ADA compliant.

The Equal Rights Center and an individual plaintiff were represented in the lawsuit by the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs and the law firm of Crowell & Moring. The lawsuit was filed against Doctor's Associates Inc., and some of the Subway Restaurant owners in Washington, DC.

Subway is a privately owned company headquartered in Milford, Connecticut. It currently operates more than 21,000 restaurants in the United States.

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The Equal Rights Center began in 1999 and consists of three former Greater Washington agencies: The Fair Housing Council, the Fair Employment Council and the Disability Rights Council. The ERC is a unique private, not-for-profit, civil rights organization that is dedicated to identifying, challenging, and eliminating discrimination against members in all protected groups, in regard to housing, employment, public accommodations, and government services. The ERC's work includes education, research, testing, counseling, enforcement, and advocacy. To obtain more information about the Equal Rights Center, please go to www.equalrightscenter.org or call the Equal Rights Center at 202.234.3062.

The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs was established in 1968 to provide pro bono legal services to address issues of discrimination and entrenched poverty. Since its founding, the Committee has handled more than 5,000 cases on behalf of individuals and advocacy organizations in the areas of equal employment, fair housing, public accommodations, public education, asylum and refugee rights, and disability rights. For more information about the Committee, see www.washlaw.org. The Committee can be reached at 202.319.1000.

Recently ranked 18th in American Lawyer's "Pro Bono Report," Crowell & Moring has committed itself – as a firm and as a community of professionals – to assure that all citizens have access to the legal system. Crowell & Moring's promotion of broad participation in pro bono work by the firm's attorneys and staff has enabled the firm to serve a range of community needs and address civil rights issues, such as fair housing and disability rights. Crowell & Moring LLP is a full-service law firm with more than 300 attorneys practicing in litigation, antitrust, government contracts, corporate, intellectual property and more than 40 other practice areas.

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