



BILL HASLAM
GOVERNOR
STATE OF TENNESSEE

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HASLAM ANNOUNCES DISMISSAL OF ARLINGTON LAWSUIT
State completes exit plan ahead of schedule to end two decades of litigation

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam today announced that after 21 years of litigation, a federal judge has dismissed the lawsuit originally filed over conditions at the now-closed Arlington Development Center in Memphis.

Judge Jon Phipps McCalla of the U.S. District Court, Western Division, entered an order and final judgment yesterday that the state has “complied with all material provisions of the Exit Plan” that was filed in January.

“In Tennessee, we are committed to taking care of our most vulnerable citizens,” Haslam said. “The state appreciates the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and People First of Tennessee during this past year.

“I am especially grateful to the Attorney General’s Office, the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) and the TennCare Bureau for their tireless efforts in working toward a conclusion to this case. This is a big deal for our state.”

The lawsuit was originally filed in 1992 after a letter from DOJ detailed poor conditions for the residents of Arlington Developmental Center. People First of Tennessee later filed a separate lawsuit.

“This case could not have been resolved without the dedicated efforts and hard work of DIDD, TennCare, and the lawyers representing them. I appreciate the cooperation shown by all of the parties in bringing this long-running lawsuit to a close,” Tennessee Attorney General Bob Cooper said.

Since the suit was originally filed, quality assurance and protection from harm programs have been developed in Tennessee that have been recognized nationally as models for other states.

In January, the parties agreed to an exit plan aimed at resolving the litigation. Under the agreement, the state enrolled a small number of additional people in the Arlington class to receive home- and community-based services, provided additional efforts to assist class members in nursing homes to transition to the community, and unveiled plans to demolish the former residential cottages on the Arlington campus.

The state completed the exit plan two months ahead of schedule.

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