

Law Office of Lainey Feingold

DISABILITY RIGHTS LEGAL ADVOCACY

Citizens Bank Press Release

The Citizen's Bank press release was issued as a result of the Citizens Bank Agreement, negotiated by Lainey Feingold and co-counsel Stan Eichner of the Disability Law Center in Boston, Massachusetts, using Structured Negotiations on behalf of the Bay State Council of the Blind and other Massachusetts advocates.

Simplified Summary of this Document

Citizens Bank will provide 450 Talking ATMs throughout New England

Citizens will offer more than 250 Talking ATMs in Massachusetts

Providence, R.I. (October 4, 2001). — Citizens Bank today announced that it will offer more than 450 "Talking ATMs" in branches throughout the New England region. As part of its commitment to delivering enhanced, accessible services to people who are blind and visually impaired, Citizens will feature at least one talking ATM at each of its branch locations in New England by the end of 2005. The machines will also benefit anyone with difficulty reading a standard ATM screen.

In Massachusetts, Citizens will offer more than 250 Talking ATMs in its branches - more than half of which will be available for use by the end of this year. In addition to upgrading the ATMs, Citizens is improving other banking services for customers who are visually impaired, including enhancing the accessibility of its online banking pages and providing printed information in large-print and Braille.

Citizens is committed to providing all customers with the best service possible. With features including the option to listen in Spanish or English, we look forward to providing visually impaired customers - including seniors - with machines that are both cutting edge and easy to navigate. — *Robert E. Smyth, President and CEO of Citizens Bank of Massachusetts.*

Citizens collaborated with the Bay State Council of the Blind and the Disability Law Center (DLC) of Massachusetts to enhance existing plans for its New England-wide rollout.

"We applaud Citizens Bank for working with the community to ensure that many of its ATMs are fully accessible to the blind," said Judi Cannon, Immediate Past President of the Bay State Council. "Through this ambitious initiative, Citizens is proving once again that it is a company that cares deeply for its customers and also the communities where it does business."

Although nearly any type of portable headphones will plug into the talking ATMs, Citizens will provide free headsets. To order a pair, people may simply call Citizens' toll-free PhoneBank at 1-800-922-9999.

The audio component of Citizens' Talking ATMs is heard when customers plug their headsets into the machines and listen to a series of audio prompts that guide them in conducting banking transactions electronically.

About Citizens Financial Group

Citizens Financial Group, Inc. is an \$80 billion commercial bank holding company. It is headquartered in Providence, R.I., and has more than 870 offices, approximately 1,680 ATMs and approximately 16,000 employees in seven states. It operates as Citizens Bank in Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. Citizens is one of the 20 largest commercial bank holding companies in the United States. Citizens is owned by The Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc. The Citizens Web site is <http://www.citizensbank.com>.

The Disability Law Center, Inc. is responsible for protecting and advocating for the rights of Massachusetts residents with disabilities and dedicated to expanding opportunities for people with disabilities to live full and independent lives by providing legal representation and information about their legal rights. DLC can be reached at (617) 723-8455 or <http://www.dlc-ma.org>

The Bay State Council of the Blind (BSCB) is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, advocating on behalf of blind and visually impaired people of all ages across Massachusetts and throughout New England. BSCB works to improve the educational, economic, social and cultural opportunities for all people who are blind and visually impaired in the Commonwealth. BSCB can be reached at (617) 923-4519 or <http://www.acb.org/baystate/>.

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