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## **Blind Woman Files Employment Discrimination Suit against Amazon.com**

**Detroit (September 3, 2019):** Maryann Murad, a blind Howell resident, and the National Federation of the Blind, the nation's oldest and largest organization of blind Americans, have filed suit in the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan against Amazon.com for employment discrimination. Amazon is the world's largest Internet retailer and currently employs more than 647,000 people worldwide. In the first quarter of 2019 it earned approximately \$59.7 billion in revenue.

In 2017, Ms. Murad tried to apply for a virtual customer service position with Amazon but could not complete the online assessment on Amazon's proprietary customer service platform because the platform is inaccessible. The platform designed by Amazon is incompatible with Voiceover, the Apple text-to-speech screen-reading software that Murad uses to complete tasks on her computer. When she brought the problem to Amazon's attention, a representative of the company confirmed that the site was inaccessible and said that Ms. Murad should apply for another "appropriate" job. Subsequent efforts by the National Federation of the Blind to work with Amazon to resolve the issue were unsuccessful. The lawsuit alleges violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act.

"At this time of year, we celebrate American workers, but too many blind people who want to work face systemic discrimination," said Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. "Technology can enhance employment opportunities for the blind and other Americans with disabilities when it is accessible to us. When it is not, it exacerbates lack of opportunity and imperils our ability to compete in the economy and society of the twenty-first century. Amazon is fully capable of creating and deploying accessible technology and could be a leader in employing the blind. Having tried to persuade Amazon to do those things to no avail, we are now pursuing a remedy for Ms. Murad and other blind workers in court."

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### **About the National Federation of the Blind**

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), headquartered in Baltimore, is the oldest and largest nationwide organization of blind Americans. Founded in 1940, the NFB consists of affiliates, chapters, and divisions in the fifty states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico. The NFB defends the rights of blind people of all ages and provides information and support to families with blind children, older Americans who are losing vision, and more. We believe in the hopes and dreams

of blind people and work together to transform them into reality. Learn more about our many programs and initiatives at [www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org).

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