

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Health Commissioner Announces Departure of Deputy
Commissioner Dr. Laura Herrera**

Baltimore, MD (February 12, 2009) – Health Commissioner, Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, announced the upcoming departure of Dr. Laura Herrera, who has accepted a position as the Director of Comprehensive Women’s Health at the Veterans Administration in Washington D.C. Dr. Herrera has served as the Deputy Commissioner of Health and Chief Medical Officer at the Baltimore City Health Department since 2006.

“As Dr. Laura Herrera moves on to her important new position with the Veterans Administration, I would like to thank her for giving Baltimore City the benefit of her vision, skill, attention to detail, boundless energy and dedication,” said Dr. Sharfstein. “She has improved our work and has initiated efforts that will serve the residents of Baltimore for years to come.”

Dr. Herrera is a board-certified family practitioner who has worked at the Health Department since 2001. Prior to her current position, she served in the Men’s Health Center and worked as medical director of the Early Intervention Initiative, a primary care program for patients with HIV infection at the Health department. As a staff member at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Dr. Herrera has also cared for patients in the hospital’s Moore Clinic.

As a member of the U.S. Army Reserves, Dr. Herrera served under Operation Enduring Freedom in 2004 and 2005. In 2008, she was deployed for a tour in Iraq at Camp Bucca.

“It has been an honor to serve the citizens of Baltimore,” said Dr. Herrera. “I look forward to my new role at the Veterans Administration, where I will continue to work to improve the health of families and communities.”

In her new position, Dr. Herrera will be responsible for enhancing the overall provision of health care to women veterans across the country. In addition, she will work to extend the focus of VA women's health care beyond gender specific issues, including new programs in cardiac health and prevention of chronic diseases.

Upon Dr. Herrera’s Departure, on February 23, 2009, Dr. Charlene Brown will serve as the Acting Deputy Commissioner for Medical Operations and the Acting Chief Medical Officer. Olivia Farrow, Esq. will serve as the Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Environmental Health and Emergency Programs. Dr. Anne Bailowitz will serve as the medical director for Environmental Health and Emergency Programs.

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