

Commission on Human Rights

KY Human Rights Commission rules on discrimination complaints at its September 2014 meeting

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Sept. 18, 2014, Louisville, Kentucky USA— The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights Board of Commissioners met today to rule on discrimination complaints for the people of Kentucky. The meeting was held at commission headquarters in downtown Louisville, Ky.

The commission ruled to approve one conciliation agreement; it approved two case withdrawals that were resolved with private settlements after it was known the commission had filed the complaint. It approved three case withdrawals, giving complainants the right to file private suits. The board ruled to dismiss nine complaints with findings of no probable cause to evidence that discrimination occurred and dismissed three complaints without prejudice.

Conciliation agreements are similar to settlement agreements and are negotiated by commission representatives. Respondents participating in the agreements deny any allegations of unlawful discrimination and violations of civil rights law. Following is a summary of the conciliation agreement approved at the meeting:

Carolyn Sheffer v. Western Kentucky Senior Citizens Union Labor Housing Inc., doing business as, Jackson House Apartments, Linda Williams, Michelle Powell and Shannon Tutor., in Paducah, Ky.: Carolyn Sheffer complained to the commission on June 4, 2014, that she was discriminated against by the landlords where she lived based on disability in the area of housing. This would be a violation of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act (Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 344) and the U.S. Fair Housing Act. Sheffer claimed that at the rental property where she lived located at 301 South Ninth Street, in Paducah, the respondents regularly supplied a van for residents who wanted to travel to town for shopping and activities. She said she was denied boarding the van because she uses a wheelchair and needed assistance from others to board the van. The respondents denied all allegations of unlawful discrimination and asserted that is the tenants' responsibility to board the van under their own power, and if the tenant cannot board the van, then the respondents cannot take them on the trip. Prior to a determination, the commission was able to assist the parties in resolving the matter with a conciliation agreement. The respondents agreed to provide additional transportation for tenants who cannot board the

respondents' van without assistance. They agreed to undergo fair housing training and submit to compliance monitoring and compliance reporting to the commission.

The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky Civil Rights Act, and through its affiliations with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), enforces the United States Civil Rights Act.

The Kentucky Civil Rights Act makes it illegal to discriminate against people in the areas of employment, financial transactions, housing and public accommodations. Discrimination is prohibited based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, and disability. In employment, discrimination is further prohibited on the basis of age (40-years and over) and tobacco-smoking status. In housing, discrimination is further prohibited based on familial status, which protects people with children in the household under the age of 18-years old and protects women who are pregnant.

For more information, contact the commission at 1.800.292.5566. For details about civil rights and commission activities, visit the website at kchr.ky.gov. For news about civil rights and information pertaining to protected classes, visit the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights Facebook and Twitter sites.