

Commission on Human Rights

KY Human Rights Commission issues rulings on discrimination complaints

Press Release Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Contact Information: Victoria Stephens

Commission Headquarters: 1.800.292.5566

Stephens's Mobile Telephone: 502.641.0760

Feb. 11, 2015, Frankfort, Ky. – The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights Board of Commissioners at its meeting yesterday in the state capitol in Frankfort ruled on discrimination complaints for the people of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The commission ruled to accept two conciliation agreements and accept two case withdrawals that were resolved with private settlements after respondents were made aware complaints had been filed with the commission. The board accepted one case withdrawal giving the complainant the right to file a private suit and ruled to dismiss 18 complaints with findings of no probable cause to evidence discrimination may have occurred.

Conciliation agreements are similar to settlements and are negotiated by commission officials. The following are the two conciliation agreements ruled upon at the meeting:

In two separate conciliation agreements, Stephanie Hadley v. the City of Bardstown, Ky. and the Joint City-County Planning Commission of Nelson County, Ky.: Hadley complained in January 2014 to the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights that the City of Bardstown and also the Joint City-County Planning Commission of Nelson County discriminated against her based on the protected class of disability in the area of housing. This would be a violation of both the Kentucky and United States Civil Rights acts. Hadley alleged that she requested from her landlord a reasonable modification for a wheelchair ramp to her residence to accommodate her daughter's disability, to which the landlord agreed. Hadley claimed the City of Bardstown and Nelson County refused to waive the entities' variance fee for building structures not within the scope of their planning guidelines. Both entities denied the violation of any civil rights law. All parties agreed to resolve Hadley's complaint with conciliation agreements rather than pursue litigation. In the agreements the city and county agreed to waive the variance fee and to establish an ordinance that waives future variance fees for construction of structures made pursuant to lawful requests for reasonable modifications to accommodate a disability. The City of Bardstown agreed to compensate Hadley in the amount of \$2,500. Both entities agreed to report to the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights within one year to evidence that the ordinances are established.

The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky Civil Rights Act (Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 344), and, through its affiliation with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, enforces federal civil rights laws.

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 in the aforementioned areas 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 on the basis of 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 it protects women who are pregnant. It is also a violation of the law to retaliate against a person for complaining of discrimination to the commission.

For more information, contact the commission at 1.800.292.5566. For information about the commission and civil rights, visit the website at www.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. Directly link to the sites from the commission website address listed above.