

From: jeremy@lifekeycounsel.com
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: therapist advocating for homeless disabled clients
Date: Thursday, October 27, 2022 1:22:07 PM

Hello, and thank you for reading.

As a local mental health therapist, recently working with a disabled client and speaking with her low-income housing manager as well as the management company. I would just like someone in power to understand the challenges faced by many that have no voice and absolutely no power to fight for their own legal rights...and the abuses they face because those in power around them know this. The powerlessness of the disabled is often exploited, intentionally or otherwise. They pose no legal threat, so attention goes elsewhere.

In the case of my client, her new low-income housing manager became abusive at their first meeting, and my client has chosen to become homeless rather than fight. This is a common outcome for those that have zero ability to fight, due to physical or mental/emotional limitations. I did report to the management company, and they offered to allow my client to meet with someone else to complete yearly financial recertification, but there was no follow through, even as I reached out by phone and email daily. All the deadlines passed.

Yes, I plan to report these grievances to fair housing, to DHS, to Secretary of State, and others. In the mean time, my client is homeless, disabled, and nonverbal. Shelters will not accept my client because she has no ability to attend required meetings. Long-term housing waitlists are endless, and she literally has no energy for interviews and no ability to get there when they require her to interview in-person. (She is bedbound more than 90% of the time, and travel will leave her in a flare that lasts weeks or months.)

And she has to wait for each potential manager to review my (counselor-written, as legally required) request for reasonable accommodations. These requests include things like no entry before 3pm and advanced notice for any required meeting. These are reasonable. They might add half an hour of work each year for any manager. But managers look at them and say no, so she remains homeless.

Building managers know the disabled have no ability to defend their own legal rights. There is no oversight. I've called multiple agencies. They offer help or offer nothing. They may just not answer or call back. If there's no entity that has the power to provide accountability, the laws that protect the disabled might as well not exist.

It's impossible to legislate for every conceivable situation, and so many disabled just fall outside of any legally defined box. Their whole world is one of exceptions, and many wait in daily struggle while we that have more privilege take our time sorting out the rules that mean something only to those that have the ability to comply.

Thank you for reading, and best wishes,
Jeremy

Jeremy McAllister
Lifekey Counseling

Mailing Address:

4230 SE King Rd #374
Portland, OR 97222

tel: 503-284-6754
fax: 888-432-2598

email: jeremy@lifekeycounsel.com
website: <https://lifekeycounsel.com>
encrypted video sessions: <https://doxy.me/lifekey>
See website for more secure communication options.

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.