



October 30, 2020

To whom it may concern:

The Fair Housing Council of Oregon, a statewide civil rights organization, is providing this letter to make sure you understand your legal responsibilities under federal and state civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination. Oregon public accommodations law prohibits motels and hotels from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or age. Fair housing laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status (presence of children), disability, sexual orientation, marital status, domestic violence survivorship, and source of income.

In addition, federal and state fair housing laws come into play when a guest does not have a permanent address, the motel or hotel is serving, temporarily or long-term, as the home address, and the resident has the intent to be returning to the location as their dwelling. The source of income protection means places providing housing cannot refuse to house individuals because the payment would be made by a social service agency. Motels and hotels are required to follow fair housing laws when for instance a guest is residing there because of damage to their home, because they do not have a home, or because they have left a home where there was domestic violence.

In these situations, motels and hotels cannot:

- Refuse to accept guests referred by social service agencies
- Refuse to accept third party payments from social service agencies
- Refuse to accept "local residents"

If the individual has stayed at the motel or hotel before and behaved in a way that violated rules of behavior, the motel can, of course, refuse to accept them again as a guest.

When a social service agency refers a guest to the motel or hotel, the motel or hotel is not permitted to ask the agency the race, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, etc. of the potential guest. Please also note that assumptions of exposure to or contraction of COVID-19 also raise implications of disability related fair housing violations under the law. Further, any adverse action against individuals or agencies that raise fair housing issues is considered retaliation under the law.

If you would like more detailed information about your responsibilities under civil rights laws, please visit our web site, www.fhco.org or contact us at information@fhco.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shyle Ruder".

Shyle Ruder, Education and Outreach Director

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