

November 4, 2015

Another form of reasonable accommodation is for a landlord to allow a resident a companion animal if provided a note from a doctor or other medical professional. A companion animal is just a “normal” animal not trained to perform any specific function. It has been found that people with post-traumatic stress disorder, autism, severe anxiety or an emotional disorder may need a companion animal to function. It is the person’s need for the animal that is important, not the animal itself or its abilities. Companion animals are not considered pets and therefore a “no pets allowed policy” does not apply to them. Furthermore, someone with a companion animal cannot be charged a pet deposit. Companion animals most often are dogs and cats, but birds, rabbits, gerbils, snakes, rats, mice, fish, amphibians and other species can also be considered companion animals.

November 11, 2015

What happens when the investigation is completed?

After a thorough investigation, the investigator writes a detailed report. In the report, you will find your allegation as stated in your charge. You will also find a summary of what the Respondent (the person you are alleging discriminated against you) said in response to your allegation. Included in the report is a detailed description of all the evidence received from the Respondent, witness statements, and any evidence from the onsite investigation. You have the opportunity to read a summary of the evidence used to make the determination.

November 18, 2015

What happens when the investigation is complete? (Cont.)

The information in the detailed report is given to one or two commissioners. The commissioner (s) may make a no probable cause finding which means that there was not enough evidence to suggest that discrimination occurred. This does not mean that you were not treated unfairly. It just means that there was not enough evidence to support a legal finding of discrimination.

The commissioner (s) may make a probable cause finding which means that evidence suggests that discrimination may have occurred. This does not mean that discrimination occurred. It just means that there is enough evidence to suggest that it may have occurred, and the commission needs to continue with the case.

November 25, 2015

What Happens If You Receive A No Probable Cause Finding?

If you receive a no probable cause finding, you have the opportunity to appeal the finding. If you want to appeal a no probable cause finding, you need to submit your request in writing within (10) ten days. The law requires that you provide the Commission new evidence and not just say you disagree with the finding. The Commission may grant your request for an appeal or it may deny your request. If your request is granted, the Commission will hold a public appeal hearing.

December 2, 2015

The next few posts will address a few of the misconceptions people have about Metro.

Misconception: Metro is my advocate and will represent me in my charge of discrimination.

Metro is not an advocacy agency, and its investigators are not advocates. Metro is a civil rights law enforcement agency. The law does not allow us to be advocates. Metro does represent the public interest. The law says that it is in the best interest of the public that discrimination be addressed, rectified, and eliminated. To represent the public interest, the law gives Metro the legal authority to take and investigate complaints of discrimination. The law requires Metro to be a neutral

fact-finder and requires Metro to make decisions based on evidence and the law. Metro gathers facts from both the person alleging discrimination and also the business or housing provider being accused of discrimination. Both sides have a right to provide information and tell their side of the story. One of the investigator's primary objectives is to gather evidence from all parties involved. It is then Metro's duty to neutrally examine the evidence and decide whether or not the evidence establishes a legal case of discrimination.