



Disability Rights Iowa

LEGAL PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY

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Disability Rights Iowa writes Amicus brief in 8th Circuit Court of Appeals Case

Disability Rights Iowa is asking the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals to affirm a decision from the Northern District of Iowa which held that accepting funds from a Federal Housing Voucher as a form of rent payment is a reasonable accommodation under the law.

DES MOINES, Iowa. — People with disabilities have long fought for their right to reasonable accommodation. In a case that has been appealed to the 8th Circuit, an Iowan woman is requesting a reasonable accommodation that her landlord accept a Housing Voucher to pay her rent in full, due to her inability to work caused by her disability.

“This case demonstrates how critical it is that individuals with disabilities and mental illness have available, accessible, and safe housing of their choice in order to live independently. Discriminatory barriers should be eliminated in order for individuals to have meaningful opportunities to avoid institutionalization, homeless or barriers to recovery,” said Cynthia Miller, Counsel for Amicus Curiae. Whitney Driscoll, also serving as Counsel for Amicus Curiae says “Protections against discrimination in housing are critical rights for Iowans with disabilities and mental illness. Disability Rights Iowa is proud to have submitted an Amicus brief in support of enforcing those protections for our community.”

The District Court found in favor of the tenant with the disability and Disability Rights Iowa as Amicus Curiae is asking that the 8th Circuit agree and affirm that decision: i.e. that landlord acceptance of a Housing Voucher to pay the full amount of rent is a reasonable accommodation for a tenant whose disability prevents them from working and earning additional income.

Catherine Johnson, Executive Director of Disability Rights Iowa adds “we are honored to submit an Amicus Brief in this case. As the Protection and Advocacy System for the State of Iowa, DRI is charged with protecting and advancing the rights of Iowans with Disabilities. Through our Amicus, DRI seeks to share our expertise in relevant disability rights laws and benefits and provide additional arguments for the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals to consider in their opinion. The outcome of this case is significant to the Disability Community. DRI welcomes the opportunity to provide the disability perspective on the issues before the Court.”

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