

**DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING**

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DFEH Settles Housing Disability Discrimination Case Against Adams West, Bedford Group.

Los Angeles Landlord to revise disability accommodation policy and pay \$20,000

Los Angeles – The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) has reached a settlement in a housing disability discrimination case with Adams West Associates, Ltd. and Bedford Group of Companies, LLC, involving an applicant with emotional support cats who was denied tenancy at a property owned by Adams West and managed by Bedford Group.

The complainant filed a complaint with DFEH in July 2018 alleging his efforts to rent an apartment the previous year came to a sudden halt when the property manager realized he would be moving in with his three emotional support cats. The property manager repeatedly cited a “no pets” policy as the reason for the applicant’s ineligibility, even after the applicant provided a note from his psychologist stating that living with his emotional support cats was necessary to accommodate his disability.

DFEH found cause to believe a violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act had occurred and brought the matter to mediation, resulting in a settlement in which the applicant will receive \$20,000 to compensate for his emotional distress and for the increased rent he had to pay at the property he ultimately moved into.

“Housing providers cannot rely on a ‘no pets’ policy to turn away tenants or applicants with service or emotional support animals.” said DFEH Director Kevin Kish. “The law requires more: engaging the tenant or applicant in a good faith interactive process to determine whether an exception to the policy can reasonably be made.”

In addition to a monetary settlement, Adams West and Bedford Group have agreed to train their officers and property managers on disability accommodation and the interactive process, to revise their current policies, to ensure fair housing posters are prominently displayed at their properties, and to report compliance to the DFEH.

Staff Counsel Adam Chayes represented DFEH in this proceeding.

The DFEH is the state agency charged with enforcing California’s civil rights laws. The mission of the DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit the DFEH’s web site at www.dfeh.ca.gov.

