

MWOC Client Story - Dorothy

This is a story about Dorothy, her husband and 4 children seeking to find a home that would accommodate the family a few days before Christmas. It began with a message that MWOC received on Thursday afternoon December 21, 2006. It was from Dorothy asking if we had received her application for a security deposit for \$2,200. A fax had been received but it contained only 2 pages and did not contain enough information on which to base a decision. The normal application can contain 11 or more pages and include a cover letter from the client's advocate that describes the circumstances that necessitated the need to apply for financial assistance. The main issue was that the advocate for the client had gone on vacation over the Christmas-New Year period and no one else at the agency had any knowledge about the situation.

Two additional messages were received soon after this one. The first was from the potential landlord inquiring about the status of the application and the second was from an attorney at South Middlesex Legal Services (SMLS). The attorney had received a call from Dorothy requesting his assistance in processing the application. The attorney had previously worked with Dorothy and knew of the family's situation.

MWOC responded to each of the messages. First the attorney was contacted to explain the status of the application and to learn more about the family's situation. The attorney offered to speak with the landlord. The landlord was contacted next to explain how the application process functioned and where it stood. The landlord offered to talk with the attorney. The last return call was made to Dorothy explaining everything was in good standing.

Late on Friday afternoon the attorney called and said he had talked with the landlord and that the landlord would let the family move into the house on Saturday if he had some assurance that there was a possibility of receiving the security deposit the following week. The attorney agreed to submit a complete application for Dorothy on Tuesday, the 26th and said that Dorothy had obtained \$900 from a friend leaving a balance of \$1,300. In addition, the attorney vouched for the client's ability to sustain future financial obligations.

With this information, the landlord was called and told that MWOC would issue a check to cover the balance of the security deposit on Tuesday December 26th. The landlord agreed to let the family move into the house on Saturday the 23rd.

All of this took place within a period of 30 hours with the cooperation of all parties involved and allowed the family to have Christmas in their new home.