



Maine Human Rights Commission

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INVESTIGATOR'S REPORT

PA15-0419

March 27, 2017

Sean LaPlante (Glen, NH)

v.

Days Inn (Kittery, ME)

I. Summary of Case:

Complainant Sean LaPlante, a prospective guest of Respondent Days Inn ("Inn"), alleged that the Inn discriminated against him based on his disability when it refused to allow him to stay at the Inn with his service animal. The Inn denied discriminating against Complainant, stated that Complainant was turned away because his credit card was declined. The Investigator conducted a preliminary investigation, which included reviewing all of the documents submitted by the parties and requesting additional information. Based upon this information, the Investigator recommends that the Commission find that there are **reasonable grounds** to believe that the Inn unlawfully discriminated against Complainant based on his disability.

II. Jurisdictional Data:

- 1) Dates of alleged discrimination: November 8, 2014.
- 2) Date complaint filed with the Maine Human Rights Commission ("Commission"): August 26, 2015.
- 3) The Inn offers overnight accommodations to the public, and is a "public accommodation" subject to the Maine Human Rights Act ("MHRA") and state public accommodation regulations.
- 4) Complainant is represented by Kristin Aiello, Esq. The Inn is represented by Philip Pettis, Esq.

III. Development of Facts:

- 1) Complainant provided the following in support of his claims:

Complainant suffers from a disability and requires the use of a service animal. On November 8, 2014, Complainant arrived at the Inn with his service animal to stay in a room that he had reserved prior to arrival. When Complainant got to the Inn, an employee at the front desk ("Employee") asked Complainant to provide a license or certificate for the animal. When Complainant explained that he did not have a license or certificate with him, and by law was not required to have those documents, Employee became increasingly belligerent. Employee told Complainant that he could not find his reservation in the computer and then, that his reservation was cancelled because his credit card was declined. Complainant's credit card was not actually declined. Complainant was frustrated, but remained