

City of Chicago
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
500 N. Peshtigo Court, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 744-4111 [Voice] / (312) 744-1088 [TDD]

IN THE MATTER OF

Ronald Roberts)
_____)
COMPLAINANT,)
AND) CASE NO. 92-PA-38
_____)
City of Chicago Fire Department) Date
RESPONDENT.) Mailed: August 31, 1993

TO: David Cherney Jay M. Kertez
Stein & Cherney Asst. Corporation Counsel
188 W. Randolph, Ste. 1826 30 N. LaSalle, Rm. 1020
Chicago, IL 60601 Chicago, IL 60602

ORDER

THE CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS HEREBY ORDERS:

See Attached

PURSUANT TO REGULATION 250.100(b), A PARTY MAY OBTAIN REVIEW OF THIS ORDER ONLY AFTER THE COMMISSION HAS ISSUED AN ORDER DISMISSING THE COMPLAINT OR RULING UPON AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING.

By: Clarence N. Wood
Chair/Commissioner

for: CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Date: August 31, 1993

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ORDER

On August 28, 1991, Complainant Ronald Roberts ("Roberts") filed a Complaint against the City of Chicago Fire Department ("CFD"). Roberts, who has tonic/clonic (multiple) seizures, claimed that the CFD had discriminated against him due to his race and failed to accommodate his disability when paramedics did not carry him on a stretcher to their ambulance.

On May 28, 1992, the Commission found substantial evidence that the CFD had failed to accommodate Roberts' disability. A Conciliation Conference was held on June 9, 1993, and a settlement agreement was eventually entered into on August 4, 1992. The agreement provided, among other things, that the CFD would provide Roberts a letter indicating that he is to be transported by stretcher and that the Project Medical Directors Consortium of the Emergency Medical Services System would review the standing order concerning the use of stretchers in treating people with tonic/clonic seizures. The Commission approved the agreement and dismissed the case on August 19, 1992.

In December, 1992, Roberts notified the Commission that, on September 5, 1992, after he called the paramedics because he had suffered multiple seizures, the CFD failed to transport him by stretcher, even after he allegedly showed them the letter dated January 23, 1992, signed by Chief Trotter, which was issued by the CFD as part of the settlement. He stated that this failure constituted a violation of the August 4, 1992 Settlement Agreement.

Pursuant to Regulation 230.140, the Commission began an investigation to determine whether the Agreement had been violated. To that end, the Commission scheduled a Fact-Finding Conference, which was held, after continuances, in July, 1993.

The Fact-Finding Conciliator heard testimony from Roberts and from the two paramedics -- Robert Nelson and Frank Burens -- and two police officers -- Officer Sharon Siwek and Officer Sharon O'Conner -- who came to Roberts' home on September 5, 1992. The two paramedics and two police officers all testified that Roberts did not show them his letter concerning use of the stretcher. Further, all of CFO's witnesses testified that Roberts was asked if he wanted to be carried in a stretcher and that he said he did not. Based on the Conciliator's observation of the testimony, he found the paramedics and police officers to be completely credible. Finally, Mr. Roberts testified that the September 5th seizures had caused him to hit his head against his bed and floor. The Conciliator believes that this may have caused Mr. Roberts to be extremely disoriented and to have told them that he did not want to be carried down on a stretcher.

In sum, based on the credible testimony of the paramedics and police officers and the less certain testimony of Roberts, the Commission concludes that there was no violation of the Settlement agreement on September 5, 1992.¹

¹Although the Commission finds that there has been no violation here, we would like to suggest to the CFD that they automatically transport persons suffering from tonic clonic seizures on stretchers, even if that person states that it is necessary. Additionally, Mr. Roberts may want to consider wearing a medical bracelet stating that he has tonic clonic seizures and must be transported by stretcher.