

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ALASKA**

THE DOWNTOWN SOUP KITCHEN d/b/a
DOWNTOWN HOPE CENTER,

Plaintiff,

v.

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE,
ANCHORAGE EQUAL RIGHTS
COMMISSION, and PAMELA BASLER,
Individually and in her Official Capacity as the
Executive Director of the Anchorage Equal
Rights Commission,

Defendants.

Case No. 3:18-cv-00190-SLG

DECLARATION OF G.O.

I, G.O., declare as follows:

1. I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Alaska. I am competent to make this declaration and the facts stated herein are within my personal knowledge.

2. The Hope Center has helped me so much. I can only describe it as a blessing. About two years ago, I found myself without a home in Anchorage Alaska. I spent one night outside. Then someone told me about the Hope Center's women's shelter. I am so grateful that they did.

3. I went to the Hope Center as soon as I heard about it and I slept every night in the Hope Center's women's shelter for nearly two years. During that time, I also graduated from the Hope Center's bakery program. And I recently started working through

the MASST Program (the Mature Adult Alaskans Seeking Skills Training Program). Two month ago, I was able to get housing of my own.

4. I don't think any of this would have happened for me without the Hope Center. The Hope Center provided me a safe place where I could rest. Being able to rest and feel safe let me focus on other things, like the bakery program and the MASST Program so that I could take care of myself and now get housing.

5. That one night that I slept outside, I could not sleep. I was afraid for my safety. But I was also afraid to go to other shelters because I knew I would not feel safe there. Men and women both sleep at other shelters. Because of some past experiences, I do not feel comfortable sleeping around men. I do not want to do it.

6. When I am in public, I can be around men because if I run into a man that is drunk or makes me uncomfortable, I can leave or seek help. I am fully dressed and awake, so I can take care of my safety. That would not be true for me when I am in my pajamas, sleeping.

7. If the Hope Center had to let biological men into its women's shelter, I would not feel safe. Like that one night on the street, I would not be able to sleep knowing a biological man is sleeping so close to me.

8. I know who the individual is who filed the complaint against the Hope Center. I was not there when he tried to come in to sleep at the Hope Center's women's shelter, but I would not have felt comfortable or able to sleep having any biological male in the same room with me.

9. That is why it is so important to me that the Hope Center is able to continue offering a safe, secure place for women to sleep where no biological men will be present. The beds at the Hope Center's women's shelter are very close together and all the women sleep in a big room. Many of the women use the restroom to change clothes, but some change clothes in that big room, near their beds.

10. I know many women that stay at the Hope Center's women's shelter who have experienced abuse, and like me they also would not feel comfortable changing or sleeping in a room with a biological male.

11. It is also important for the Hope Center to be able to tell people that the shelter is only for biological women, so that women like me know that there is a safe, loving, secure place to rest at night.

12. I am glad that when I needed it, the Hope Center was able to provide me that safe place, where I would not worry that a biological man would be near me while I slept. That made me feel cared for and respected. The staff understood that I needed to feel safe and they provided that for me. They were compassionate. And now I am able to work and once again have my own housing.

13. I want that to be possible for other women like me. If the Hope Center is forced to let any biological man into the women's shelter, that safe place will be gone.

