

October 2008

Female tenant who is blind complained the maintenance man at her apartment complex refused to make repairs in her apartment and poked fun at her because of her disability. The tenant claimed the maintenance man told a neighbor, "I don't have to fix anything for her, she can't see it anyway." The tenant also claimed the maintenance man embarrassed and humiliated her with his frequent, hurtful, and untrue comments about her clothing not matching or being inappropriate. For example, one time he told her, "Your shirt says, 'I like to screw.'" The tenant filed her complaint against the maintenance man and his employer, the property owner. Before beginning the investigation, Commission staff offered the parties an opportunity to resolve the complaint through mediation. With the help of a Commission Mediator, the parties negotiated mutually-acceptable terms of settlement. The tenant agreed to close her complaint. The maintenance man and property owner agreed to release the tenant from her lease, waive the 'early termination of lease' fee (two months rent or \$1,400), and pay the tenant \$1,000 in compensatory damages for her pain and humiliation. The maintenance man and property owner also agreed not to discriminate in the future, not to retaliate against the tenant in her search for alternative housing, and to place a fair housing poster in each of their rental offices. Total value of settlement: \$2,400.