

City of La Crosse Human Rights Commission Complaint Form

[Click here](#) to download a printable version of this form.

COMPLAINANT INFORMATION (YOURSELF)

Name * Charo Smith
Address * 233 East 13th Street Apt 1009 Chicago, IL 60605
Phone [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]

RESPONDENT INFORMATION (PERSON/PERSON(S) YOU FEEL HAVE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST YOU)

Name * Laurie Olson
Address * 1307 Badger St LaCrosse Wisconsin 54601
Phone [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]

Name * Loretta Hass
Address * 1307 Badger St. LaCrosse Wisconsin 54601
Phone [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]

Name * Nancy Peters
Address * 1307 Badger St. LaCrosse Wisconsin 54601
Phone [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]

TYPE OF DISCRIMINATION ALLEGED

Check the appropriate Category, indicate the Address or Location of facility you were denied the equal opportunity to use or enjoy, and the Basis of the alleged discrimination.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they were denied the equal use/enjoyment of a facility **located in the City of La Crosse**.

Category: *

- Housing
- Place of Public Accommodation or Amusement [i.e. restaurant, hotel, retail shop]
- City Facility

Address/Location: * For Section 8 Program
1307 S Badger St. LaCrosse Wisconsin 54601

Basis (Check all those you feel may apply):

- Sex
- Race
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Marital Status
- Color
- National Origin or Ancestry
- Lawful Source of Income
- Physical Appearance
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity or Expression
- Political Activity
- Familial Status
- Domestic Partnership
- Student

FACTS

To the best of your ability, give a detailed statement regarding the facts giving rise to this Complaint. The statement must include the date or dates of the alleged discrimination. City Ordinance provides that a written Complaint **must be filed within 180 days** after the complainant knew or should reasonably have known that the alleged act or acts occurred. Additional pages may be attached to this form if necessary.

Statement *

I applied for the LaCrosse Wisconsin Housing Authority Section 8 program and several other housing programs with the LaCrosse Housing Authority in August of 2023 Online. I received initial contact from Courtney McHenry by email asking for me to send copies of me, Malik's and Maro's state Ids and social security cards as well as filling out and returning any other documentation that was sent to me by 9/07/23. I complied, and it was sent by the deadline by email. Sometime afterwards Ms. McHenry sent me several emails claiming she couldn't move forward with the process until she received my requested information although I was sending the information back to the right email address.that was given.

Because I had not received an automatic reply from google stating my emails failed, I called her asking if she had received my emails or not. She rudely told me to go to the bottom of the letter that she sent. I explained to her I would not have called but for letters stating that the housing authority tried to make two attempts requesting for me to send the information needed. Ms. McHenry told me if she needed anything else she would contact me and hung up. I didn't bother about calling back and asking any more questions because of her tone and hanging up.

In November 2023 Laurie Olson called me by phone asking if I was still interested in the Section 8 program, I told her yes. She asked if I was working and I told her I was starting a new job that week, but I was doing Uber at times. Ms. Olson told me she would be in contact by email.

Laurie sent me an email stating the interview process would be held on 12/07/23 by phone at 1 p.m. and that she would need more information to continue the process which was: my uber earnings, my cash app statements or anyone in the household that had cash app statements. Malik's and Maro's social security disability 2023 income letters and a food stamp benefit letter by 11/13/23.

I sent her my monthly summary earnings statements for UberEats September through October 2023 for myself including itemized deposit amounts with dates for my Uber on cash app and I emailed Malik and Maro's social security disability income award letters for 2023 as needed and all cash app statements for Malik by the due 11/13/23 including Malik's UberEats monthly earning statements and a food stamp benefit letter.

On December 6, 2023, Ms. Olson a day before the phone interview, called and sent me several texts asking about Malik's and Maro's new benefit amounts for January 2024 and asking me to email her their new award letters and to send my complete history statements for cash app with my bank account statements for September, October and November 2023. Though I had already sent her an itemized list of my deposit amounts for Uber for all the months she requested along with the monthly summary from Uber of my earnings. Plus I had already sent Malik's earnings from UberEats, but she still needed our November 2023 statements from us both.

Because my bank account that I rarely use is connected to my cash app and is needed to use with Uber. Laurie asked for me to send her my bank account info too. My new job is a part-time temporary position, and my hired date was on 11/07/23 (starting 11/09/23) which I told her about in November when she first called me asking if I was still interested in the program. Now she was requesting that income as well though I had just started and it was a temp job.

Ms. Olson also asked if I could get a verification of income from my new job even though this is a day before the telephone interview for 12/0/23. I advised Ms. Olson it might be impossible, but I would try. She also needed the Direct Express bank statements for Malik and Maro where they receive their disability income on. Although she has their reward letters for 2023 and 2024 and that this is a government issued card that you cannot add money on.

My job sent the letter the next day to me on 12/07/23 in the morning stating my hired date and my hours, which was 20 hours

and stating it is a part-time temporary position. Ms. Olson emails me a letter back stating my job overqualified us for the Section 8 program because based on her calculations we made over \$54,000 including cash app deposits and my bank account (that she inflated and misinterpreted).

If I made \$54,000.00 I definitely wouldn't need Section 8, food stamps nor stay in a high crime area (Woodlawn).

I called her by phone knowing that was not true and she told me I could appeal. I faxed, emailed and mailed my appeal request and received an email that a hearing would take place by 1 p.m. on 12/15/23.

On 12/14/23 Ms. Olson called me to verify which number I asked to be called at for the meeting for the next day, I told her 225-397-1339. On 12/15/23 I received a call from my son cell 312-258-6158 for the interview, not the number I requested. Luckily my son was home.

On 12/15/23 Loretta Hass and Nancy Peters contacted me regarding my appeal stating Laurie Olson could not attend due to a previous engagement. They both asked me questions when they asked me about my income I told her that initially Laurie asked for September and October 2023 income for us and then a day before the meeting, she wanted Malik's and Maro's January 2024 and a lot of other information.

They seemed confused and told me they would call me back later that day or Monday.

Well, they called me back the same day saying Laurie was in attendance now and what happened was Laurie needed the new information about the boys 2024 income because my lease would not start until 2024 that's why they needed their new information. They also said I was still denied because my new job annual income is still over \$16,000.00. I advised them that it was a temporary job and I wouldn't even be working there if I moved to LaCrosse and how could they consider it when I hadn't even started until after speaking with Laurie in November when she called me asking if I was still interested in the program. Plus how can I earn money at a job from Illinois and if I move or live in Wisconsin. They still said we made over the limit of \$47,000.00 even though I quit my new job and me or Malik hadn't done little to no Uber Deliveries in November or December 2023.

Loretta and Nancy told me I should apply for the public housing program there and I told them I was denied for that as well. Everything I applied for they had denied me for. They both told me to appeal that decision for public housing. I asked them, isn't that the projects -public housing? I told them I was in project housing before and it was not a good thing. Loretta stated their community in LaCrosse is way different than Chicago and Nancy agreed.

On 12/17/23 I emailed Ms. Olson and Ms. Peters (I hadn't had Ms. Hass email address yet I believe) requesting a denial letter with detailed information explaining how they got their decision for the informal hearing from 12/15/23. Ms. Peters said Ms. Hass would send me the denial letter. I also sent a request to appeal the decision for the Section 8 program to Steve Schauf, Executive Director of the Housing Authority in LaCrosse. The only reason I sent him a request was because he sent me a letter stating I was denied for another housing program there. So, I was just covering everyone who I had some contact with by letter or phone.

I received the denial letter on 1/04/23 from Loretta Hass. I emailed Ms. Hass back asking for a 2nd appeal regarding the Section 8 decision and that I wanted to appeal the public housing as well as her and Ms. Peter advised me to.

On 1/05/23 Ms. Hass sent me a letter asking if she could ask me a few questions by phone this morning. We spoke and she told me I could not appeal the section 8 decision; it was final. She told me she couldn't tell me where I could find information about how to determine or calculate income for the Section 8 program for LaCrosse all income is assumed as annual. And proceeds to ask me if I ever lived in Texas, me or Maro. Ms. Hass stated that in the Tenants History she saw an address in Texas for me and Maro and this was one of the reasons I was denied. Not receiving information about where I resided before and my current landlord not giving references I believe that's what she asked for.

I said I never lived in Texas, me or Maro. I told her I had applied for a place recently and no history came up for Texas nor was it on my credit report that I had viewed recently. She verified my address on St. Lawrence and that's it. I told her I lived in Nevada from what period, but she never asked me to verify my address in Las Vegas, Nevada. I asked her what the years for Texas she saw and wouldn't say. All she said she would believe me.

Ms. Hass told me basically she was calling in regards to the public housing appeal and she would call me back on Monday 01/09/23 to let me know her decision but she still would be using my income at over \$47,000.00 (which I do not make).

My income has been inflated on purpose. HUD doesn't accept cash app statements as verification nor consider food stamps to be income but Ms. Olson asked for it.

Ms. Olson asked for documentation that was not needed and added income to make it seem I made more than what I have and had earned. I solely believe this is because of race, color and adult children receiving SSI because of their disability. Ms. Hass used the word "assumption" instead of using facts. You can't make assumptions on income. And making statements that the LaCrosse community is better than Chicago.

233 East 13th Street Unit 1009 Chicago, IL 60605 is my mailing address.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I would like to submit documentation.