

Dear Dr. Landry and the Alameda CARES Facility,

On behalf of the Mayor's Commission of People with Disabilities (MCPD), we would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to tour your facility and deepen our understanding of the mental and behavioral healthcare landscape in Oakland and Alameda County.

We appreciate having the generosity with your time, as well as that of Bips Roberts, who provided answers for many of the questions Commissioners had about the nature of the work conducted at the facility, as well as statistics about attendance, retention rate, and the number of disabled people who visit the facility.

Though the Commission has yet to take a formal stance on CARE court, court-mandated treatment at CARES facilities, or affiliated mental and behavioral health bills passed in the last few years by the state of California, Commissioners were glad to see that the facility is able to provide meals, showers, and clothing to unhoused community members, as well as assisting with locating housing for those that need it.

While there was much to appreciate about the Alameda CARES facility, commissioners did want to follow up on three things which were noticed during their visit:

- 1) The inability of the CARE facility staff to locate a wheelchair access key made our visit difficult, as it meant the commissioners were unable to inspect the premises in-person for most of their visit. The key, as far as the commissioners know, still has not been located. We advise a replacement be found immediately, and that spare ones always be in stock, so that such a situation can be avoided in the future. While we appreciate that there is a wheelchair lift available, it must also be able to function for many physically disabled members of the community to visit the facility and enjoy the benefits.
- 2) Similarly, the showers, which are a huge benefit the facility can provide to Oakland residents, were not up to ADA standards of wheelchair accessibility. Grab bars must be installed in the bathroom shower, as well as ADA flooring, and a folding shower seat. The shower was also not roll-in, as there was raised tile separating the toilet and sink area from the shower area. This must be removed for the shower to be made wheelchair accessible.
- 3) Commissioners also noted a comment that was made during their Q & A with Cares Facility workers about schizophrenia, suggesting that the disability can be treated with a change in diet. Commissioners would advise further reading on this topic for facility workers.

Thank you again for the opportunity,

The Mayor's Commission on People with Disabilities