



A story about Housing in Missoula..... Bob Deaton's Homeless Housing Story

Here is a positive story about housing. I was volunteering as a mentor to Trevor, who had been in Montana State Prison many years and only recently released. Fortunately, he had family in the area, who could help him with the initial housing costs, but he still had the disadvantage of being a parolee, when it came to finding rental housing. I found a rental for him that was admittedly pretty marginal, which he rejected because it needed a cabinet replaced and new floor covering in the kitchen. Also, it was a 2 bedroom place, which would require having as a roommate someone he met at work. So he searched online and found a small apartment he liked and then, most remarkably, was able to convince a large property management company to rent it to him. I was happily surprised to hear of the favorable response, and asked him how he was able to overcome the company's reluctance to rent to ex-offenders. He replied that he "psyched himself up" to present all the reasons that he should be chosen as a tenant. First, he had an aunt and brother in the local area, who could back him financially, if needed. Second, he presented himself as a clean-cut, healthy, articulate person by his dress and manner. Finally, he respectfully reminded the property manager that he was a customer, and that the agent's job was to find customers apartments. It worked, and he soon moved into a smaller apartment.

*This story was collected by members of the Advocacy for Housing Subcommittee. Look for other stories and information related to the lack of housing in Missoula, coming this fall at Holy Spirit.*

Pass it On: please share this House Story with others in your life.