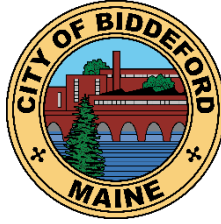


---

# CITY OF BIDDEFORD, MAINE

---

**From: James Bennett, City Manager**  
City of Biddeford, Maine  
205 Main Street  
Biddeford, Maine 04005



**Phone:**  
207-284-9313  
**Email:**  
[james.bennett@biddefordmaine.org](mailto:james.bennett@biddefordmaine.org)

---

**June 14, 2018**

## **Housing Discrimination Complaint against City Formally Withdrawn**

**BIDDEFORD** — A federal housing discrimination complaint filed against the city of Biddeford earlier this year has been formally withdrawn by the claimant.

Journey House LLC, which operated a sober house on Hill Street, filed a complaint in March with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) alleging Biddeford's Codes Enforcement Office used zoning and land use ordinances to discriminate against residents recovering from substance abuse. The complaint cited the 1968 Fair Housing Act.

On June 4, however, Journey House formally withdrew the filing, prompting HUD to terminate its investigation and administratively close the complaint.

"The city is grateful to not have to continue to put resources towards an active investigation," City Manager James Bennett said, "but we remain confident that no discrimination against Journey House occurred. We firmly believe a completed investigation would have resolved this in the city's favor."

The sober house operated in a multi-unit apartment building at 45 Hill Street capable of accommodating six men. Jesse Harvey, the owner of Journey House, opened the facility in December 2016. The complaint said the city violated federal law in October 2017 when a code enforcement officer told Journey House's landlord their building was out of compliance with standards for rooming houses within multi-unit buildings because it lacked a sprinkler system. That prompted Harvey to file the complaint with HUD on March 26, 2018. Journey House had already vacated the building in December of 2017.

###