

# PRESS RELEASE



Catholic Charities

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **Catholic Charities' Response to Allegations of Illegal Activity at Kenton Women's Village**

Portland, Oregon / November 12, 2017

Catholic Charities was recently made aware of a report alleging illegal drug activity at Kenton Women's Village on November 6, 2017. Since receiving the initial report, Catholic Charities has begun an investigation into the incident and has been in communication with Portland Police Bureau, Kenton Neighborhood Association and other partners. This week, we will continue to review this matter with all primary stakeholders, including the residents of Kenton Women's Village, to develop a thoughtful and effective response using all available resources.

While there is a zero-tolerance policy for illegal activity at Kenton Women's Village, the Portland City Attorney's Office informed Catholic Charities that all clients of the village are protected by landlord-tenant law, including eviction procedures. As such, clients violating rules of the village or choosing not to participate in case management may do so, with impunity. Catholic Charities took responsibility for the village under the assumption that landlord-tenant law would not be applicable to this transitional program model.

Because Catholic Charities is committed to assuring the wellbeing of villagers and maintaining a healthy environment for those participating in the program, we find the City Attorney's interpretation of landlord-tenant law to be problematic.

Catholic Charities has gone above and beyond in many areas of management and security, including securing and paying for overnight security that is not reimbursed by our current limited contract. Like our partners, we agree that any type of illegal activity – in or near the village - threatens the success of our clients and the safety of the larger neighborhood.

Catholic Charities will have a full report of the investigation by the end of the week and will implement necessary changes to respond accordingly. We will continue to collaborate with the community to achieve our shared goals of getting villagers into permanent housing with access to the services they need to succeed.

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