

**To: CE DEI Committee**

**From an email sent to Christina McAnuff**

**For: New Business, August 10 DEI Committee Meeting**

**Subject: Re: [Welcoming the Stranger] Advice on Hotel Eviction**

As many of you know, there was a major change on May 5 , when the city stopped guaranteeing housing, although they have fortunately been able to house most people who have come since then. But for people who arrived before May 5, the City remains committed to housing them as long as is needed. They may need to move around, and we all know the hotels and shelter are not good housing options at all, but they will not be kicked out with nowhere to go.

As you all know, this uncertainty and instability causes a lot of extra stress and trauma for a vulnerable population desperate for some stability, and I'm really sorry for this woefully inadequate assurance.

The reality is, the City of Portland is already committing a tremendous amount of resources to new arrivals, and there is simply not enough housing for them in the city (not least because so many apartments are AirBNB - another big problem!!!). One important step is for cities and towns outside of Portland to step up and welcome new arrivals, in large enough numbers that no one has to feel like the only African family in town, or the only Black kid in their class, or the only student in the ELL program. Some towns are really stepping up, recognizing how much this aging state can benefit from all these wonderful new families who just need some support to get on their feet so they can start contributing as community members, leaders, workers, and entrepreneurs. That is a hard message for some Maine towns to understand, but we can help spread that word and change the thinking. If you live outside of Portland, let your elected officials know that you value investment in welcoming new immigrants, and push back on prohibitive zoning efforts "to preserve the town's character" which usually means "to keep new people out".