

8/11/2020

I would like to take a moment to talk about my experience working with Bernice Platz as my housing counselor at the Portland Housing Center. I have been a long time client; I started working with Shalonda back in 2016. When I was told I was getting a new housing counselor when Shalonda left I was a bit worried because I had built a relationship with Shalonda. Right off the bat Bernice was welcoming, efficient, responsive and knowledgeable. She knew right where I was in the program and was able to answer any questions I had and helped me keep on track with my goals. Bernice and I really connected when I tried to buy my first condo (I've tried to buy multiple times in the four years- it's been a wild ride) and I was freaking out calling her asking all sorts of questions. She took my call right away, gave me sound advice while letting me make my own decisions. She also did not sugar coat the reality of the situation, which was exactly what I needed. I was so incredibly grateful to have a person I could call, who knew her stuff and was able to be calm in my reactionary times. Since that call, I have regularly made contact with Bernice beyond our PHC follow up calls asking her questions and getting her views on things. She was always receptive and made time for me even though I know you all are so busy! She never made me feel like I had to rush to get off the phone and at the same time we were able to focus in on the important aspects of what needed to be discussed.

I had to do the most extensions for the IDA program that was allowed AND with Covid-19 I was about to try for another extension. Each time I had to request an extension both Bernice and Lindsay would work together to see how we could make things work for me. There were many times that Bernice heard the new proposed difficulty of my home purchasing situation and would provide resources, ideas and options for what I might try. I certainly kept her on her toes! And she was gracious every step of the way.

I got the keys to my new house last Wednesday and I can truly say that this would not have happened without the Portland Housing Center and for me Bernice was a big part of that. Thank you all of you!!!

Abbey Bowman