



MRS. MAE TILLMAN

Mae Tillman Rent Order Case Goes to Court with CSS Help

Mrs. Mae Tillman has found someone on her side.

On August 27 she entered High Point Memorial Hospital for surgery to remove varicose veins in both legs.

She was out of work from her job at Phillips Foscue Company from then until November 2, as a result.

For her rent period September 16-October 15 her landlord, Mendenhall-Moore Realtors, accepted a payment voucher, or "rent order," from the county Department of Social Services.

Because Mrs. Tillman was still unable to raise her \$60 rent for the October-November period, she requested another rent order from the county agency.

The promise-to-pay statement was issued to Mendenhall-Moore again. This time, however, they refused to accept it. Mrs. Tillman was faced with eviction.

It was this dilemma that Mae Tillman took to the Concentrated Social Services staff.

Mrs. Tillman, who lives apart from

her husband, had rented from Mendenhall-Moore since 1967. Only once within that time was she late in her rent payment, she said.

She has five children, three of whom still live at home. They are aged 14, 13 and 12.

Mrs. Tillman was on public assistance once, when she and her husband broke up. But for the most part, she has been on her own.

"I've been making my own way, and I'm telling you, I've seen some hard days. But I've made it," she says proudly.

She moved into her current home at 1407 Furlough Street two years ago. It is a four-room frame house that is very hard to heat, according to its occupant. No utilities are included in the rent.

During her recent convalescence she had no income whatever to meet her bills. With no one else to turn to, she went to the Daniel Brooks office of Concentrated Social Services.

"They tell me that's what these agencies are there for," said Mrs. Tillman. "In a case like my case, it sure was good to have somebody.

"I try not to be a bother to anybody unless I have to. It was nice to have someone to turn to."

Mrs. Tillman, who is like several other tenants in the past whose landlords refused to accept the Social Services' rent order, was the first in High Point to agree to go to court with her case.

Legal Aid Office lawyer Ken Glusman was retained on Mrs. Tillman's behalf, and on November 4 they appeared in Small Claims Court to protest Mendenhall-Moore's refusal to take the rent order.

The court ruled in favor of the realtor. Glusman then prepared to appeal the eviction ruling, and to challenge the constitutionality of the state law requiring tenants fighting eviction to post bond equal to at least three months' rent.

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Provides 'Overlooked' Services

Concentrated Social Services- When A Family Has A Crisis

Concentrated Social Services gives families a shoulder to lean on when they need it.

Established in January through a Model Cities Commission contract with the Guilford County Department of Social Services, the two-office agency in High Point has helped over 400 so far - families who need assistance in working out crisis problems.

These problems can be anything from legal to financial to personal, and are kept in strict confidence by the 25-odd Concentrated Social Services (CSS) employes.

CSS is not a "welfare" program. Rather, it works closely with the county public assistance office through the Human Resources program to provide counseling and referral services many times overlooked because of time, worker, and money shortages.

Ralph Cauthen, a trim, graying, youthful man with positive ideas, is director of the project. His 25 employes are scattered among three places: the Southside Neighborhood Office on Vail Street, the primary location; the Daniel Brooks community building basement; and the downtown office of the Guilford County Department of Social Services.

Jointly funded by Model Cities and the county agency, CSS is for residents of the Model Neighborhood area. In each of the five neighborhoods, there is a team of three to four workers consisting of a homemaker, a social service aid, and one or two social workers.

These team members serve as contact persons in the Southside, Macedonia, Spring Valley and Harrison-Brockett neighborhoods.

"The main differences between our set-up and that of the county office's are that we include a para-professional person on our team - a homemaker - and we try to get to the problems before they start developing seriously," says Cauthen.

"Our contact persons pick up re-

errals, they find out what's going on in the field. It's an outreach service. . . . We don't buy the attitude that 'we're here and the people know we're here, so we'll wait for them to come to us'."

In helping families work out their crises, CSS encounters such problems as pregnancy, sickness, eviction, unemployment, placement of elderly citizens, and teenagers "in trouble." Whatever the problem, Cauthen and his staff give personal attention to it, and place the family in the right direction.

"High Point has been very receptive to us," says Cauthen, "as have the Social Services Department. Before, they didn't have time for a great deal of personalized service because they were overloaded, and tied down with public assistance.

"People who needed attention were often not eligible - they were either not old enough, not young enough, not poor enough. . . . Now, through us, the state is doing a tremendous job by making our services available to anyone in the Model Neighborhood. Not all are eligible for money, but they are all eligible for services," he went on.

Here is an example of the type of service CSS performs: A 16-year-old high school junior is pregnant and she wants to know what to do. She comes to the Concentrated Social Services Office and asks for help.

A counselor takes her aside and outlines all her alternatives - keeping the baby, giving it up for adoption, abortion. Should she decide to keep her child, she would be sent to her personal doctor or to a clinic for prenatal care. If the girl were unable to afford the medical treatments, CSS would make financial arrangements for her.

However, should she decide to terminate her pregnancy, she is discouraged against trying to obtain an illegal abortion.

"We've seen too many serious medical problems caused by illegal abortions," says Cauthen. "So when a girl decides in favor of a therapeutic abortion we work with her to see that it's legal and sanitary."

The office at 208 Vail Street is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. Besides the services already mentioned, CSS offers what Cauthen describes as "special things."

One of these "special things" is a telephone reassurance service for the elderly. Volunteers call nearly 60 senior citizens on a regular basis to check on them, as well as give them personal contact. If they don't answer, someone from the telephone pool is sent in person to their home.

A homemaker service is also available for persons who cannot clean house or cook for themselves for reasons of sickness, arthritis or some other crippling factor, or old age. Twenty elderly Model Neighborhood residents are being provided with a

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Citizen Participation Goes To Franklin Street Home

Citizen Participation has new headquarters.

Since November 2, Milt Stallings and his Citizen Participation Outreach staff have been housed at 1305 Franklin Street.

The single-story house replaces the CP office at the Model Cities Commission building, 609 S. Main Street.

The purpose of his office, according to Stallings, is "to reach more people in the Model Neighborhood, inform them of our services, and get people involved in the Model Cities process."

In addition to the director, the office is staffed by Chris Hubbard, Ronald Dawson, Frank Walls, and Jeannette LeGrande. A secretary is also to be hired.

Regular operating hours for the Franklin Street location are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. However, workers do have assignments for evening community work, and arrangements can be made for evening meetings.

Task Force and community meetings will be scheduled for the office, as well as workshops and the Regional IV council.

Open house for the new headquarters will be held Tuesday, November 30, from 4 to 6 p.m. The public is invited.