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October 22, 2019

MAN WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY FILES LAWSUIT AFTER SUSTAINING INJURIES IN MARION COUNTY JAIL

INDIANAPOLIS –Even while in police custody, individuals with disabilities are entitled to treatment and the same protections from correctional staff to ensure they remain stable and safe, just as inmates without a disability. This was not the case for Keith Crumley, a man with an intellectual disability and mental health diagnoses.

On October 13, 2017, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) officers responded to a call that someone had witnessed a person throwing a bottle. Upon arrival, the officers found Mr. Crumley, his roommate, and a staff person from their group home, who was responsible for their care and safety. When the staff person could not provide any information about Mr. Crumley nor his diagnoses, the group home supervisor arrived and provided limited information about Mr. Crumley’s disabilities but could not provide basic information such as his full name or date of birth. Mr. Crumley was then transported to the Eskenazi Emergency Department for a detention hold and psychological evaluation. During the detention hold, Eskenazi staff noticed he likely had an intellectual disability that made it extremely difficult for him to understand or appreciate what was happening and shared their concerns with the arresting officer that jail staff wouldn’t be able to manage Mr. Crumley’s behaviors and medications, based on his low level of functioning. Against the advice of Eskenazi staff, the IMPD officers made the decision to transport him to the Marion County Jail where he was detained for three days. During this time, jail staff failed to administer Mr. Crumley’s prescribed medications, failed to provide adequate supervision and services to support his behavioral and medical needs, and Mr. Crumley suffered from unexplained injuries that required outside emergency medical attention.

In a lawsuit filed in federal district court in Indianapolis by Indiana Disability Rights, Mr. Crumley through his mother and legal guardian Shirley Crumley, are confronting those who failed to appropriately protect and care for Mr. Crumley while he was in their custody. The lawsuit is seeking justice for Mr. Crumley and hopes to impact the larger system to change the way individuals with disabilities are treated in the correctional system.

“It’s important to the Crumleys that the defendants are held accountable for what happened. Individuals with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations within a correctional setting,” states Nikki Gray, Staff Attorney with Indiana Disability Rights (IDR). “Mr. Crumley relied on the defendants for his safety and wellbeing and as a result of their failure to protect, he unnecessarily suffered additional trauma and stress.”



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Indiana Disability Rights (IDR) is the designated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System and Client Assistance Program (CAP) for the State of Indiana. The mission of Indiana Disability Rights is to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities through empowerment and advocacy. For more information, visit www.IndianaDisabilityRights.org.