

Roles and Boundaries Panel Case Study

Background

Location: Green Gables Apartments, 184 unit Section 8 development.

Resident: Mr. Bellefleur

- 56 years old, single.
- 10-year resident of Green Gables Apartments.
- Employed as a maintenance provider at another housing development until recently.
- Keeps to himself; quiet, polite, well-liked by other residents and staff.
- No children, but close with niece and nephew.

Property Manager: Ms. Stackhouse

- 25 years in property management, 15 at Green Gables Apartments.
- Very involved with and committed to residents, often stays late dispensing advice.
- Regularly attends AA meetings with husband who has been sober 10 years after a DUI arrest.

Resident Services Coordinator: Mr. Merlotte, MSW

- Been at Green Gables Apartments for 18 months, no prior work in housing.
- Prior to becoming an RSC, worked with youth at psychiatric hospital.
- Well-liked by residents, particularly the children. Has brought a variety of resident programming to the building. Sometimes has difficulty connecting to the adult residents.
- Grew up in a volatile and somewhat violent home environment due to an alcoholic uncle that lived with his family. Considers his uncle and those like him as 'dirt bags'.

Current Situation:

Recently, there have been several complaints from Mr. Bellefleur's neighbors about loud music and talking very late at night. In passing, several other neighbors have mentioned to Ms. Stackhouse that they can smell a very strong odor when passing by Mr. Bellefleur's apartment. In addition, Ms. Stackhouse has noticed that he has been around the development more frequently during the day. She has also seen Mr. Bellefleur coming out of the liquor store next to her favorite lunch spot carrying 30-packs of beer several times. Recently, during a routine response to a maintenance request, the maintenance provider noticed Mr. Bellefleur's once tidy apartment had clothes, mail, newspapers, beer cans and empty takeout containers strewn about. The garbage was overflowing the barrel and there were several ants crawling around the kitchen floor. In addition, there were several ashtrays overflowing with cigarette butts, some even on the floor, and several burn marks on both the sofa and the rug.

During his recertification, Ms. Stackhouse finds out that Mr. Bellefleur is no longer employed. He angrily tells her he left employment because the company didn't appreciate his work or what a good employee he was. Mr. Bellefleur also tells her that he kicked out his niece and nephew on their last visit because they keep trying to tell him what to do. Ms. Stackhouse quietly listens, completes the recertification and later asks Mr. Merlotte to contact Mr. Bellefleur, telling him she suspects Mr. Bellefleur has a drinking problem.

Mr. Merlotte schedules a visit to Mr. Bellefleur's apartment. After a short interaction, Mr. Bellefleur turns belligerent and Mr. Merlotte leaves frustrated. He tells Ms. Stackhouse that Mr. Bellefleur doesn't want his help and is a waste of his time and hers, adding he'd rather spend his time assisting the many residents who want the help.

The next day, Mr. Bellefleur stops by Ms. Stackhouse's office to complain about Mr. Merlotte. Although it is just past ten in the morning, Mr. Bellefleur smells like beer and is somewhat glassy-eyed. Ms. Stackhouse listens patiently for about a half an hour. At this time, Mr. Bellefleur begins to get emotional saying that no one loves or cares about him. Ms. Stackhouse assures him that people do care, and then says she is concerned that he may have a drinking problem. Mr. Bellefleur breaks down and tells her that he had stopped drinking for many years because it had been a problem before but had recently begun drinking again. Ms. Stackhouse begins asking him questions about his previous treatment, whether he had used medications, and whether he had been diagnosed with any mental health issues previously. She talks about her husband's treatment and shares that he had also been suffering from depression. She offers to bring Mr. Bellefleur to her husband's doctor and says she will bring him with her husband to the AA meetings they attend. He agrees to go.

Several months go by, and after a spotty start in his sobriety, Mr. Bellefleur is doing well in his recovery. However, he has grown more and more dependent on Ms. Stackhouse. He still depends on the Stackhouses to bring him to meetings and stops by Ms. Stackhouse's office several times a day when he feels the urge to drink. He even calls her on weekends. Ms. Stackhouse is beginning to feel burnt out, taken advantage of, and unappreciated.