



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

July 10, 2019

City Council President Linda M. Morad
Honorable Members of the City Council
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Council President Morad and Honorable Members of the City Council:

I would like to request a one-year **WAIVER OF RESIDENCY** for Melissa Batchilder, Compliance Officer (Community Relations Specialist), for the New Bedford Police Department who currently resides in Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

Given the exceptional circumstances detailed in the attached letter from Ms. Batchilder and Chief Cordeiro, I believe a waiver is appropriate and justified.

Ms. Batchilder and Chief Cordeiro will be available at the meeting to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Jon Mitchell
Mayor

JFM/sds
Enclosures

cc: Police Department
Melissa Batchilder

CITY CLERK
2019 JUL 11 P 2:52
CITY CLERKS OFFICE
NEW BEDFORD, MA



New Bedford Police Department

Office of the Chief of Police

871 Rockdale Avenue, New Bedford, MA 02740
Phone: 508-991-6330 Fax: 508-961-3022

Jonathan F. Mitchell
Mayor

Joseph C. Cordeiro
Chief of Police

Paul J. Oliveira
Deputy Chief of Police

July 2, 2019

Jonathan F. Mitchell
Mayor
City of New Bedford
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Mayor Mitchell:

I am requesting a Residency Waiver for Melissa Batchilder, Compliance Officer (Community Relations Specialist), for the New Bedford Police Department. Mrs. Batchilder resides at : Fairhaven.

She submitted a letter explaining her challenges in relocating to New Bedford. I have attached it for your consideration. In summary, her husband is disabled, and their home accommodates his mobility needs. Additionally, they have guardianship of their six-year-old granddaughter who is a victim to the opioid addiction. Mrs. Batchilder is concerned with moving and impacting her stability and creating an additional hardship on her granddaughter.

Should you have any questions or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Cordeiro", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph C. Cordeiro
Chief of Police



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Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro
New Bedford Police Department
817 Rockdale Ave.
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Chief Cordeiro,

I am beyond grateful for the possible opportunity to become a part of your remarkable and visionary efforts to modernize the New Bedford Police Department.

As it relates to the residency requirement, I appreciate your willingness to make the effort to obtain the waiver. Following are some details that may help.

In 2012, I married my husband, Rob Gray. At the time he was the General Manager of the Fairhaven Shipyard. Just a few days after our wedding, he fell 15 feet from the back of a boat in dry-dock onto concrete when a ladder collapsed. He became permanently disabled and I moved to Massachusetts. While Robbie is mobile, it is to a limited degree and deteriorating. When we purchased our house in late 2012, it was to accommodate his needs in terms of wide-open concept and we continue to upgrade it as necessary for his health. We're currently in the midst of planned renovation to the bathroom to accommodate his challenges.

The day Robbie returned home from his last surgery at the end of 2013, DCF approached us to become guardians to Avery, Robbie's granddaughter. Prior to this we had very limited contact, because of her parents' condition. Avery was just an infant at the time and both parents are opioid-addicted. We have faced all the challenges that go along with opioid addiction, court appearances, balancing what's best for Avery and her parents, the roller coaster her parents ride and most significantly how this all impacts the life of the sweetest little 6-year-old who just finished kindergarten at St. Joseph's School. She was baptized at our parish, St. Joseph's in Fairhaven. We live around the corner and she has been attending St. Joseph's school since pre-school. The street, the neighbors, the parishioners and the school are very much the only community she has ever known.

What we didn't realize about children who experience these circumstances is the attachment disorder they face. When separation from the mother occurs, despite the infancy, the child

becomes psychologically impacted and struggles greatly with attachment and trust. The child (Avery) really hungers for stability/routine. It's as if she is always on a hunt to reclaim the sense of security she lost as an infant. We've had her assessed and while the psychologist, Dr. Andrea McCauley of New Bedford, praises her resilience and coping skills, the attachment issues are evident and something she will face for years to come. Having a stable and consistent environment is key to ensuring she succeeds in the years ahead.

Moving anywhere would be a significant risk to Avery's mental health, which is why I hesitate to quickly say we would just pick up and move. It is so much more than just selling our house and moving across the bridge.

Thank You.

Sincerely,

Melissa Batchilder