

Case 16: Who wrote the new building rule?

Content note

This case involves disability access and a request for an exception to a building rule. No student should share their own disability, health information or housing situation, so keep the discussion on Sami’s building.

This case explains general rules. It is not legal advice for your situation.

Overview

Students read a short story in which an unsigned notice says a building’s rear door will be locked at 8 p.m. That step-free door is the only one Sami can use. Students compare the notice with last year’s house rules and the entrance plan, and they map how the rule affects different residents. They read HUD’s Fair Housing Act overview as a source of questions, then rewrite the notice or write Sami’s question to the building manager.

Before this case

- Students should already be able to:
- summarize several documents for a group
 - tell a building policy from a law
 - recommend an action and name what it costs

Objectives

Students will be able to:

Objectives, continued

- separate what the notice, the house rules and the law each say
- represent several residents fairly
- state legal points as questions
- recommend a feasible collective next step

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C
- HUD’s Fair Housing Act overview
- A local tenant-resource page you select

The task in this edition

Task: Write a tenant-association briefing on the notice: what it says, whom it affects, which rules may apply and what to ask.

Students make: Briefing, 400—500 words

Pacing

Opener (page 310): 5 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the evidence.

Key terms (pages 311 and 312): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (page 316): 8 min. Short on time: 8 min.

Look at the evidence (page 317): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Students fill in only the “What it shows” box.

Pacing, continued

Key idea (pages 318 and 319): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Sort the evidence (page 320): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (pages 321 and 322): 6 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (page 323): 15 min. Short on time: 12 min. Build the notice, house rules and law chart together on the board.

Your draft (page 324): 25 min. Short on time: 20 min. Students draft the first two sections in class and finish at home.

Check your work (pages 325 and 326): 6 min. Short on time: skip. Collect briefings and score them with the rubric yourself.

Questions to discuss (pages 327 and 328): 10 min. Short on time: 5 min. Use question 1 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 329): at home.

Periods: full chapter 102 minutes; one period 60 minutes.

Standards

RI.11-12.1 Back up an analysis with the strongest evidence from the text, including where the text leaves things uncertain.

W.11-12.2 Write an explanatory text that conveys complex ideas clearly and accurately.

Case 16 plan, continued

Standards, continued

W.11-12.5 Strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing or rewriting, focusing on what matters most for the purpose and audience.

SL.11-12.1.c Keep a discussion moving with questions that probe reasoning and evidence, and make sure the full range of views is heard.

SL.11-12.1.d Respond to different views, pull together what each side says, resolve conflicts where possible and name what still needs research.

D2.Civ.6.9-12 Critique the relationships among governments, civil society and markets. In this case: Students critique the relationship between private landlords, tenants and public housing law.

D2.Civ.12.9-12 Analyze how people use and challenge laws at different levels to address public issues. In this case: Students analyze how residents use fair-housing protections to address rules.

D2.Civ.13.9-12 Evaluate public policies by their intended and unintended outcomes and consequences. In this case: Students evaluate a rule's intended outcome (security) and unintended effects (access).

D4.7.9-12 Assess options for individual and group action on local, regional and global problems through reflection and causal reasoning. In this case: Students assess options for individual and collective action as residents.

Codes of ethics

- **ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:** Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** “We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent...” (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

- ■ □ **Opener (page 310):** Medium
- □ □ **Key terms (pages 311 and 312):** Low
- □ □ **Look at the evidence (page 316):** Low
- □ □ **Look at the evidence (page 317):** Low
- □ □ **Key idea (pages 318 and 319):** Low
- ■ □ **Sort the evidence (page 320):** Medium
- □ □ **Practice (pages 321 and 322):** Low
- □ □ **Check your work (pages 325 and 326):** Low

Try it at your school

Ask who wrote the rule before you argue about it.

- When a new rule is posted where you live or at school, write down the date and take a photo
- Look for who issued it and what document it changes
- Ask a trusted adult to help you ask the building manager or office

Try it at your school, continued

- Find your city's or county's tenant or housing help page with an adult

Who to ask: A parent or guardian, the building manager, a local tenant or housing help line, a school social worker

Safety: Don't post neighbors' names, unit numbers or private situations online. Let adults handle lease disputes.

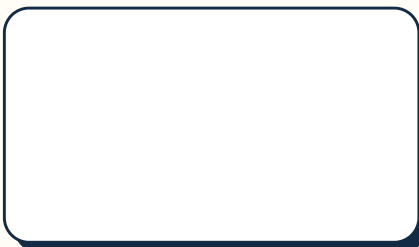
Sources

- Gothamist, “Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan,” November 21, 2019
- Legal Services NYC, “Brooklyn tenants file legal opposition to landlord's application to install facial recognition entry system in building,” May 1, 2019
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), “Fair Housing Act overview,” No date listed

Case 16: Who wrote the new building rule?

An unsigned notice says the building's only step-free door locks at 8 p.m., and Sami's workshop runs later.

On your own Read What happened and underline the two changes the notice announces. About 5 minutes.



Mari hands a yellow sheet to Sami across a white table while Caio listens. This scene comes from Case 4.

Your role: You're the one who photographs the notice and writes down when and where it was found.

New skill: Find who has the authority to make a rule.

What happened

It is Monday morning in Sami's apartment building. A new notice is posted beside the common-room door. It says the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. every night. It also says the common room is "for resident social use only," with "NO BUSINESS USE" in capital letters. The notice has no name, no date and no contact.

That rear door matters to Sami, who lives in apartment 3B and uses a manual wheelchair. It is the building's only step-free entrance. The front entrance has four steps and no ramp. Sami also runs a workshop in the common room, and it goes past 8 p.m.

Your question: Who has the authority behind this notice, and what should Sami ask the building manager?

Caio reads last year's house rules beside the notice. Those rules let residents reserve the common room for classes and resident-run workshops. The new notice does not say whether it replaces them. Before anyone starts arguing, Sami photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud and go straight to the evidence.

Say this

"Suppose this notice appeared by your door tomorrow. What is your first question?" — Write questions on the board. Circle any that ask who wrote it.

Watch for

Misconception: Students assume bold type means the rule is official. **Listen for:** "It's in capital letters, so it's real."

Then: Ask what would prove who wrote it. Write "issuer, date, contact" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.

Heat check

Medium. Students may share their own disability or housing situation.

Cool-down: Say: "Nobody needs to share their own health or home. We're talking about Sami's building."

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 5 minutes.

Authority Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.

En español: autoridad

In this case: The notice uses bold type and capital letters but names no issuer. Sami has to find out who has the power to make this rule.

Reasonable accommodation A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.

En español: acomodo razonable

In this case: Sami could ask the building for a key fob for the rear door, so she can get in after 8 p.m.

Documentation Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.

En español: documentación

In this case: Sami photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it, before anyone argues about what it said.

Who is involved

Sami

Lives in 3B and runs a workshop in the common room

“Rear door locked at 8. That’s the only door I can get through. My workshop runs later. So, questions. Plural.”

Caio

Reading last year’s house rules beside the notice

“All caps, bold, no name, no date. Somebody made it look official. I still don’t know who.”

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

 Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

“Write your first guess now. You will test it against three documents.” — First guesses stay private unless a student wants to share.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think a building must grant every accommodation request. **Listen for:** “She asks, so they have to say yes.” **Then:** Point to the key idea: whether a building grants an accommodation depends on the facts.

Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- **Cognates:** authority (autoridad), documentation (documentación), reasonable (razonable), resident (residente), access (acceso), discrimination (discriminación), disability (discapacidad), federal (federal).

Heat check

   Low.

Answer key

Any first guess is fine. Students return to it on the My take page.

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, should Sami follow the new notice?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

➤ My first guess is that the notice may not be valid, because it has no name, date or contact.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 311. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 311.

Reading passage

Who wrote the rule?

On your own Read the passage. At each Stop and think box, pause and answer the question in your head or with a partner. About 6 minutes.

Words to know

- **Authority:** Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision.
- **Reasonable accommodation:** A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place.
- **Documentation:** Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when.
- **Decision-maker:** A decision-maker is the person or group with the power to make a particular choice.
- **Barrier:** A barrier is something that blocks or limits a person from taking part.

The story: An anonymous notice

Sami, 23, lives in apartment 3B, studies design and uses a manual wheelchair. On Monday morning, she finds a new notice beside her building's common-room door. It announces two changes "effective immediately." The rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly, and the common room is for resident social use only, with "NO BUSINESS USE" in capitals. The notice carries no name, no date and no contact.

Each change touches her directly. The building's entrance plan lists a front entrance with four steps and no ramp, a side door for service use only and a rear door that is step-free and opens to the elevator hallway. After 8 p.m., the notice would lock the only door she can use. It would also cloud the future of the workshop she runs in the common room, which goes past 8.

Sami does not start with outrage. She photographs the notice and writes down when and where she found it, before anybody starts arguing about what it said. Caio, the oldest in the crew, brings last year's house rules, handed out at lease signing. He reads the notice the way an editor reads copy. All caps, bold, no name, no date. Somebody made it look official, and he still does not know who.

Your role is to help Sami keep a clean record of the notice before anyone starts arguing.

Stop and think. Why does formatting signal authority without proving it?

Pacing

Reading: about 6 min (768 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: An anonymous notice":** Why does formatting signal authority without proving it?
2. **After "Authority, sources and missing definitions":** How does the undefined phrase "business use" change what Sami can conclude?
3. **After "The law, the process and a Brooklyn example":** Why might the Atlantic Plaza Towers example not apply directly to Sami's building?

Authority, sources and missing definitions

Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision. The case separates the look of authority from its substance. Formatting signals power but does not prove it. An unsigned notice is not automatically invalid, but its force depends on who issued it and what it claims to change.

The new skill is finding who has the authority to make a rule. It draws on three earlier skills. From Case 1, you compare the notice with an original document, last year’s house rules, which let residents reserve the room for “gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops” through the building office. From Case 7, you ask what stage the rule is at. From Case 10, you take the question to the office that can answer it, here the building manager. Case 4’s **decision-maker**, the person or group with the power to make a particular choice, names what Sami is looking for.

Caio’s comparison finds a definitional gap. The old rules explicitly allow resident-run workshops. The new notice bans “business use” without defining it, so nobody can yet say whether Sami’s workshop is affected. The notice also does not say whether it replaces the old rules or adds to them.

Case 10’s **barrier**, something that blocks or limits a person from taking part, describes the locked rear door. A **reasonable accommodation** is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place, such as a key fob for the rear door. **Documentation** is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when. Sami’s photo and note will matter if the facts are disputed later. She keeps her two questions apart: who has the authority, and how she gets in after 8. Neither friend calls the notice illegal, because they do not yet know who wrote it or how the building handles access requests.

 **Stop and think.** How does the undefined phrase “business use” change what Sami can conclude?

The law, the process and a Brooklyn example

A landlord’s policy and the law are different sources of rules. HUD says the Fair Housing Act bars housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability, and covers most housing with some exceptions (HUD, no date listed). Guidance can change even when the law does not. In 2025, HUD withdrew several fair housing guidance documents, but the Act itself stayed the same (National Association of Realtors, October 7, 2025). Enforcement continues. In 2026, the Justice Department announced a \$750,000 settlement with a property management company in a disability discrimination case (U.S. Department of Justice, April 30, 2026).

Process can give tenants leverage. At Atlantic Plaza Towers in Brownsville, Brooklyn, the landlord applied to install a facial-recognition entry system. Tenants say they learned about it from the state housing agency, not the landlord.

This page continues page 313. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 313.

The law, the process and a Brooklyn example, continued

Because the change needed that agency's permission, they filed opposition (Legal Services NYC, May 1, 2019), and in November 2019 the landlord withdrew the application (Gothamist, November 21, 2019). That case turned on New York's rent-stabilization rules, which may not apply to Sami's building.

The NCA credo describes the posture Sami takes: "We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent before evaluating and responding to their messages" (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024).

 **Stop and think.** Why might the Atlantic Plaza Towers example not apply directly to Sami's building?

Sources

Real source | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) | No date listed

Fair Housing Act overview

Real source | National Association of Realtors (Washington Report) | October 7, 2025

HUD Withdraws Fair Housing Guidance Documents

Real source | U.S. Department of Justice | April 30, 2026

Justice Department Settles Disability Discrimination Case Against Property Management Company for \$750,000

Real source | Legal Services NYC | May 1, 2019

Brooklyn tenants file legal opposition to landlord's application to install facial recognition entry system in building

Real source | Gothamist | November 21, 2019

Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024

Credo for Ethical Communication

This page continues page 313. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 313.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document, then fill in both boxes under it. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Posted notice

Unsigned notice by the common-room door, found Monday morning

NOTICE TO ALL RESIDENTS. Effective immediately, the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly. The common room is for resident social use only. NO BUSINESS USE.

Look closely: Which features give the notice an official look? What is missing?

What it shows

➤ Two changes stated as commands: a nightly 8:00 p.m. lock and a ban on business use.

What it leaves out

➤ An issuer, a date, a contact and any definition of “business use.”

Evidence B | House rules (excerpt)

Last year’s house rules, given out at lease signing

“Residents may reserve the common room for gatherings, classes and resident-run workshops. Reservations are made through the building office.”

Look closely: What did last year’s rules allow in the common room?

What it shows

➤ A written rule, given out at lease signing, that allowed resident-run workshops.

What it leaves out

➤ Whether it still governs the room, or whether the notice claims to replace it.

Case 16 | Look at the evidence | Grades 11–12 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 8 min.

💬 Say this

“Lay the notice beside last year’s rules. What changed, and what does the notice leave out?” — Wait for the missing issuer, date and contact.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students decide the notice is fake because it is unsigned. **Listen for:** “No name means it doesn’t count.” **Then:** Ask what happens at 8:15 if the door is locked anyway. Unsigned does not mean invalid.

📄 Support

- Give the notice and last year’s rules side by side with the changes highlighted.
- Read the entrance plan aloud and sketch it on the board.
- **Cognates:** authority (autoridad), documentation (documentación), reasonable (razonable), resident (residente), access (acceso), discrimination (discriminación), disability (discapacidad), federal (federal).

🔄 Stretch

- Ask which document would settle the business-use question, and who holds it.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Entrance plan

Building entrance plan from the lobby directory

Front entrance: four steps, no ramp. Rear door: step-free, opens to the elevator hallway. Side door: service use only.

Look closely: Which entrance is step-free? What happens to it after 8 p.m.?

What it shows

🔍 The 8:00 p.m. lock falls on the only step-free entrance; the front has four steps.

What it leaves out

🔍 How the building handles access requests, and whether another route exists.

What is still missing from the evidence?

🔍 Who issued the notice and why, whether it replaces or adds to the house rules, what Sami's lease says, whether there has been a security problem at the rear door, and how the building handles accommodation requests.

Notes

Case 16 | Look at the evidence | Grades 11–12 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Students fill in only the “What it shows” box.

💬 Say this

“Lay the notice beside last year’s rules. What changed, and what does the notice leave out?” — Wait for the missing issuer, date and contact.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students decide the notice is fake because it is unsigned. **Listen for:** “No name means it doesn’t count.” **Then:** Ask what happens at 8:15 if the door is locked anyway. Unsigned does not mean invalid.

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➡ Stretch

- Ask which document would settle the business-use question, and who holds it.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key idea: authority

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 10 minutes.

A building rule should name who made it, give a date and list a contact. This notice has none of them.

Authority is the power a person or group has to make or change a particular rule or decision. Bold type and capital letters do not show who has that power. An unsigned notice is not automatically invalid, either. Sami has to find out who issued it and which document it claims to change.

A landlord's policy and the law are different sources of rules. The Fair Housing Act is a federal law. HUD, the federal housing department, says it bars housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability. It covers most housing, with some exceptions. Under the Act, a person with a disability can ask a building for a **reasonable accommodation**. A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule or practice that gives a person with a disability equal use of a place. For Sami, that could be a key fob for the rear door.

Sami cannot yet say the notice breaks the law. She does not know who wrote it, whether it replaces the house rules or how the building handles access requests. Whether a building grants an accommodation also depends on the facts. **Documentation** helps her keep those facts straight. Documentation is a record, such as a photo, a note or an email, that shows what was said or done and when. Her photo of the notice, with the date and place she found it, is documentation.

Professional standards

Adapted from a real source | American Bar Association (ABA), Center for Professional Responsibility

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct: Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims and Contentions

Summary: Summary, not a quotation: a lawyer may not bring or defend a proceeding, or argue an issue in it, without a basis in law and fact that is not frivolous. The ABA comment says lawyers must first learn the facts and the applicable law.

In plain words: Before lawyers bring a claim, they must have facts and law that support it.

Question: Before claiming a Fair Housing Act violation, what should Sami learn about the notice's author and the building's access process?

Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

 Short on time: 8 min. Skip the In the news section.

Say this

“Bold type and capital letters: do they tell you who has authority?” — Accept “no,” then ask what would.

“The ABA rule asks lawyers for facts before a claim. What facts does Sami need first?” — List them on the board.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think ABA Rule 3.1 binds Sami.

Listen for: “Sami breaks the rule if she complains.” **Then:** Say: “Rules like this bind lawyers. Each state adopts its own version, and lawyers can be disciplined. It shows how professionals check facts first.”

Support

- Read the summary aloud. Point out the label: it is adapted from a real source, not a quotation.

Stretch

- Try the NCA credo's question: what could Sami ask the building office to learn who wrote the notice and why?

Heat check

 Low.

Professional standards, continued**Your answer**

Sami first needs ____, because ____.

➤ Sami first needs the issuer, the rule it changes and the building's answer to an accommodation request, because a claim needs a basis in fact.

In the news

Real source | Gothamist | November 21, 2019

Brooklyn Landlord Does An About Face On Facial Recognition Plan

A throwback about a door rule: the landlord needed state permission to change how tenants got in, and tenants used that process to object.

Real source | HUD (YouTube) | January 31, 2014

The Federal Fair Housing Act and Reasonable Accommodations

HUD explains how a person with a disability can ask for an exception to a building rule.

Notes

This page continues page 318. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 318.

Sort the evidence

On your own Fill in each box of the map: who decides, which rules apply, who is affected and where to ask. About 8 minutes.

Map who made this rule, which rules it has to fit, who it affects and where residents can take a question. Which box is still empty?

Lock the rear door at 8 p.m. and ban business use of the common room

Who decides

Unknown issuer: the owner, the manager or someone else?

Under which rule

Last year's house rules allowed resident-run workshops
Fair Housing Act: disability is a protected characteristic

Who lives with it

Sami and other residents who need the only step-free entrance

Your way in

➔ A local tenant or housing help line, or HUD for a fair-housing concern

Whose perspective is missing?

Whose view is missing from these documents? What would you ask them?

The view that is missing is _____. I would ask _____.

➔ Other residents who use the common room or the rear door. I would ask how the notice changes their week, without naming anyone.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

“Fill in who decides, which rules apply, who is affected and where residents can ask. Which box stays empty?” — Wait for the issuer box.

Watch for

Misconception: Students write “the landlord” in the decider box. **Listen for:** “The landlord made it.” **Then:** Ask which document says so. None does. Write “unknown” and how Sami could find out.

Support

- Let students write short labels in each box before they write sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The affected-people box can turn to classmates' own access needs.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Sami and residents in the story. No student speaks for a group.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what Sami should do first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 6 minutes.

The notice says the rear door, the building’s only step-free entrance, locks at 8 p.m. It also bans “business use” of the common room. It has no name, no date and no contact. What should Sami do first?

- ☐ A Ignore it until someone signs it, since an unsigned notice may not be official.
- ☒ B Photograph it, compare it with last year’s house rules and ask the manager who issued it and how residents get in after 8.
- ☐ C Post online that the building is breaking disability law.

Why I chose it

➤ B. A treats a missing signature as proof the rule is fake, and C draws a legal conclusion from partial facts. B documents first and asks the open questions.

Improve a draft

A student’s first draft

Hi, I saw the notice about the common room and rear door. ① This is illegal and discriminatory against disabled people like me. You can’t just make rules like this without asking. Nobody signed it and nobody told us it was coming, so I don’t even know if it’s real. I’m going to keep using the room for my workshop because the old rules said I could. A lot of neighbors are upset too. ② Please take the notice down. Sami, 3B

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

“It is Monday morning, and the door locks at 8 tonight. What should Sami do first?” — Hold a vote before any discussion.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose to post that the building breaks the law. **Listen for:** “Post it everywhere so they get in trouble.” **Then:** Ask what Sami knows for sure. Point to the missing issuer and the request she has not made yet.

📖 Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Improve a draft, continued

Rewrite each marked phrase so it says only what the evidence supports.

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ Could you tell me who issued the notice and whether it replaces last year's house rules?

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ I'm requesting an accommodation, such as a key fob, so I can enter after 8 p.m.

Notes

Case 16 | Practice | Grades 11–12 educator edition

This page continues page 321.

07 Answer key

A revised version: Hi, I'm writing about the notice posted by the common room on Monday. It says the rear door will be locked after 8 p.m. and bans business use of the room. I use a wheelchair, and the rear door is the building's only step-free entrance, so I need a way to get in after 8. I'd like to request an accommodation, such as a key fob for that door. Could you also tell me who issued the notice and whether it replaces the house rules from last year, which allowed resident workshops? Thank you, Sami, 3B

Other notes on the draft:

- “disabled people like me” Sami’s access need is real and relevant. Describe it concretely: the step-free door.
- “because the old rules said I could” Useful: quote the older rule so the manager can check it.

Grades 11–12

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 15 minutes.

Write a tenant-association briefing on the notice: what it says, whom it affects, which rules may apply and what to ask.

Use: All case sources plus a local tenant-resource page chosen by the teacher.

You'll make: Briefing, 400–500 words

Time: 60 minutes

- 1 Reread Evidence A, B and C. Note what each says about the common room and the rear door.
- 2 Fill in the chart: the notice, the house rules and the law.
- 3 Write two legal points as questions in the planner.
- 4 List the kinds of residents the notice affects, without names or unit numbers.
- 5 Draft the key sections of your briefing on the Your draft page.
- 6 Finish a briefing of 400 to 500 words that recommends one collective next step.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

The notice says

➤ Rear door locked at 8:00 p.m.; the room is for social use only.

The house rules say

➤ Residents may reserve the room for resident-run workshops.

The law covers

➤ Fair Housing Act: disability is a protected characteristic.

Legal points, as questions

➤ Who issued this? How does the building handle accommodation requests?

Case 16 | Your task | Grades 11–12 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 15 min.

✂ Short on time: 12 min. Build the notice, house rules and law chart together on the board.

💬 Say this

“Three documents, three kinds of rule. Which one tells you who has authority?” — Build the chart on the board: notice, house rules, law.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Briefings speak only for Sami. **Listen for:** “The association should fight for Sami.” **Then:** Ask who else the lock affects. A briefing represents several residents.

📄 Support

- Briefing template
- Distinguishing chart: notice, lease, law

📋 Standards

Common Core: RI.11-12.1; W.11-12.2; W.11-12.5; SL.11-12.1.c; SL.11-12.1.d.

C3 Framework: D2.Civ.6.9-12; D2.Civ.12.9-12; D2.Civ.13.9-12; D4.7.9-12.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

➤ Answer key

A strong response:

- Separates notice, lease and law
- Considers several residents fairly
- States legal points as questions
- Recommends a feasible collective step

Your draft

On your own Write your first draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

First draft: what the notice says and whom it affects

➤ An unsigned notice was found by the common-room door on Monday morning. It says the rear door will be locked at 8:00 p.m. nightly and bans business use of the common room. The rear door is the building's only step-free entrance. The lock affects residents who need that entrance and anyone who runs a workshop in the room after 8.

First draft: the notice, the house rules and the law

➤ Three layers of rules apply, and each covers a different question. The notice gives no issuer, date or contact. Last year's house rules, given out at lease signing, allow resident-run workshops. The Fair Housing Act protects residents with disabilities, who can ask for a reasonable accommodation. We do not yet know who issued the notice or whether it replaces the house rules.

First draft: our recommended next step

➤ We recommend one letter from the association to the building office. It should ask who issued the notice, whether it replaces the house rules and how residents can get in after 8.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

✂ Short on time: 20 min. Students draft the first two sections in class and finish at home.

💬 Say this

“Your reader is a neighbor at the association meeting. What should they do after reading?” — Ask for one next step a group can do together.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Recommendations are not feasible. **Listen for:** “Sue the building.” **Then:** Ask what the first step is and who would do it this week.

➤ Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. Separates notice, house rules and law.
2. States a legal point as an open question.
3. A feasible collective step.

Check your work

On your own Answer the Check your work questions, mark your level in each rubric row and write one change you made. About 6 minutes.

- Does your briefing separate the notice, the house rules and the law? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does it consider several residents fairly? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does it state legal points as questions? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Does it recommend a feasible collective next step? ☒ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ No specifics from the notice.	☐ Mentions the notice generally.	☐ Quotes the notice and older rule.	☐ Quotes both and names what is still unknown.
Reasoning	☐ Declares a legal violation.	☐ Complains without a clear need.	☐ Connects the rule to a concrete effect.	☐ Separates the communication problem from the legal question.
Audience & purpose	☐ Hostile or vague.	☐ Polite but no request.	☐ Specific request the manager can act on.	☐ Specific request plus questions that clarify authority.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone edits only.	☐ Replaces the conclusion with a question and request.	☐ Explains how each change makes a yes more likely.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

 Short on time: skip this page. Collect briefings and score them with the rubric yourself.

Say this

“Mark your level in each row. Then change one sentence so the manager can say yes to it.” — Circulate and ask for one request made more specific.

Watch for

Misconception: Students soften the tone and keep the legal conclusion. **Listen for:** “I said it nicely.” **Then:** Point to the Revision row. Replace the conclusion with a question and a request.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: The briefing is scored for accurate separation of the three layers, fair treatment of several residents, legal points framed as questions and a feasible recommendation.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Quotes the notice and older rule.
- **Reasoning:** Connects the rule to a concrete effect.
- **Audience & purpose:** Specific request the manager can act on.
- **Revision:** Replaces the conclusion with a question and request.

This page continues page 325. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 325.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete each sentence frame. About 10 minutes.

- 1 Which missing fact would most change how you see the notice?

➤ The issuer. A notice from the owner carries different weight than one from a neighbor, and knowing the issuer tells Sami where to send her questions.

- 2 The notice bans “business use” without saying what that means. What would you need to know to decide whether Sami’s workshop counts?

➤ A written definition from whoever issued the notice, the facts of Sami’s workshop and which document governs: the notice or last year’s house rules.

- 3 A building may want a door locked at night. How could it keep that door secure and still let Sami in?

➤ A fob reader keeps the rear door locked to outsiders and open to residents who need step-free entry. The policy should name whom to contact.

My take

My claim: ____.

➤ Sami should request an accommodation and ask about authority without claiming a violation yet.

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🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Use question 1 as an exit ticket.

💬 Say this

“Answer with a detail from the evidence. You do not need to share details about your own home.” — Post the question numbers and collect one answer per question.

🔗 Stretch

- List every kind of resident the 8 p.m. lock could affect, without names or unit numbers, and one question each would ask.
- Going further: Read HUD’s Fair Housing Act overview. Which protected characteristic applies to Sami? List two facts you would need before saying the law was broken.
- Going further: The notice affects other residents too. Write a short note from Sami to other residents that explains the change and asks who else it affects. Leave out names, unit numbers and claims you cannot support.
- Going further: Rewrite the notice so every resident can tell who issued it, what changed, when it starts and who to ask. Put your version next to the original. Ask a reader which details they would still want to check.
- Going further: When a new rule is posted where you live or at school, write down the date and take a photo. Look for who issued it and what document it changes. Ask a trusted adult to help you bring your questions to the building manager or school office.
- Research what local tenant organizations exist in your area and what they offer
- Compare federal fair-housing protections with your state’s list of protected characteristics

My take, continued

The best evidence is ____, because ____.

☞ The entrance plan, because it shows who bears the cost of the lock.

Someone who disagrees might say ____.

☞ Security at night protects every resident, including Sami.

The limit of the evidence is ____.

☞ No document shows who issued the notice or why.

I would change my mind if ____.

☞ The building showed a signed rule and a working way in for Sami after 8.

Notes

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This page continues page 327.

Heat check

 **Question 3: Medium.** Students may share their own or a family member's disability, or talk about crime where they live.

Cool-down: Keep the talk on Sami's building. Say: "Nobody needs to share a personal or family situation to answer."

Talk about this case at home

Case 16: Who wrote the new building rule?

In this case, an unsigned notice in an apartment building says the only step-free door will lock at 8 p.m. Your student compared the notice with last year's building rules and practiced asking who made the new rule.

Questions to talk about

- 1 What should a clear building or school notice include?
- 2 Whom can people ask when a posted rule is unclear?
- 3 Why might someone keep a photo of a notice with the date?

Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.



See the case online.

Case 16 | Talk about this case at home

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Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

“Share this page at home, or read it with an adult you trust.”
— Nobody needs to share a personal story to complete it.