

My name is Joey Reynolds. I am representing myself.

I belong to Moosakahiken First Nation, which is located in Northern Manitoba. I grew up in The Pas. I am a Sixties Scoop survivor.

In 1988, when I was 18, I moved to Winnipeg, looking for educational and employment opportunities. I soon started falling through the cracks, partly because of the PTSD I was experiencing as a result of the Sixties Scoop and partly because of the racism I was subjected to.

In 1998 I moved to Prince Albert for two years. There I decided to take my first year of university. But learning disabilities and an unhealthy lifestyle started to get in the way. My anxiety and mental illness got worse and started to effect a lot of the things I really wanted to do. PTSD, anxiety, depression and not taking care of my mental, physical and emotional health all led to a downward spiral.

In 2001 I moved to Regina, where I have lived ever since. Addictions again began to affect my life, as did racism.

Since that time I have lived in poverty and even experienced homelessness on more than one occasion. Most recently, I was homeless from April to July 2021.

For the previous 10 years I had lived in a small bachelor apartment. In January 2021, my landlord gave me a move out notice because, he said, he wanted to renovate my suite. I refused to leave because it was the dead of winter. When I did move out in April, he refused to give me a reference to help me find another place because I had refused to leave in January.

After three months of being homeless, I almost had a place at the beginning of July. I had talked to the landlord on the phone and he had told me the suite was available. But when I went to see it and the landlord found out that I am Indigenous, he said that he was doing a renovation to it and wouldn't be able to rent it to me.

Finally, at the end of July, I found another place.

What did I do during those long months of being homeless? Sometimes I couch-surfed at friends' apartments. I also utilized the overnight detox when space was available. Sometimes I found myself walking around all night when shelter wasn't available. One night I almost got beat up. Mainly I slept outside by the bushes next to Knox-Met United Church, as it felt safer there than in many other places.

It is hard to find to find a place to live in Regina that is affordable and has proper heat, electricity and running water and doesn't have an infestation. Also one with a landlord who doesn't discriminate.

It is terrible to be homeless in Regina: unhealthy, unsafe, stressful, scary, isolating, demoralizing.

Please pass the motion to end homelessness in Regina.