

Fair HOUSING NEWSletter

OCTOBER 2010



The Bowling Green Human Rights Commission is a non-profit agency dedicated to serving the community through advocating and educating for and about the rights of the protected classes which include: race, color, sex, age (over 40) religion, national origin, disability and familial status. Created by city ordinance in 1966, the commission also investigates allegations of discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations. Overall, our efforts focus on educational outreach and promoting positive human relations within the community.

With the passage of the Fair Housing Law in 1968, Kentucky established a public policy of encouraging fair treatment and equal housing opportunities for all persons, regardless of race color, religion or national origin. The Kentucky Fair Housing Act provides equal opportunity to all who buy, sell, rent, finance or insure housing. It expands the real estate market by making all housing and property available to all Kentuckians. It protects the individual's basic right to choose where to live.

Enforcement Activities:

In 2009 HUD and Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) agencies, which are HUD- certified state and local government agencies that enforce laws that are substantially equivalent to the Fair Housing Act, received 10,642 complaints alleging a violation of the Fair Housing Act. This was the fourth consecutive year that the number of housing discrimination complaints exceeded 10,000.

The most common basis of complaints was disability, which was alleged in 44 percent of complaints filed under the Fair Housing Act and substantially equivalent state and local laws. The second most common basis of complaints was race (alleged in 31 percent of complaints), followed by familial status (alleged in 20 percent of complaints).

The most common issue in complaints was discrimination in the terms and conditions of the sale or rental of property, which was alleged in 55 percent of complaints. The second most common issue in complaints was refusal to rent (alleged in 24 percent of complaints), followed by failure to make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling (alleged in 22 percent of complaints)

Education and Outreach Activities:

HUD unveiled an enhanced website to help persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) gain access to its programs and activities in accordance with Executive Order 13166. HUD's expanded LEP website features translations of its brochure, fact sheets, forms, model leases, and other documents into one or more of 16 languages. The translated documents are available at:

<http://www.hud.gov/gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm>

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Under the Fair Housing Act, HUD is required to not only address housing discrimination, but to affirmatively further fair housing. This mandate imposes an affirmative obligation to combat decades of segregation and help achieve integrated and diverse living patterns.

HUD is drafting a regulation to reaffirm the longstanding legal requirement that HUD recipients affirmatively further fair housing. HUD is fully committed to ensuring that government funds are not being used to perpetuate segregation.

In FY 2009, HUD helped bring about a settlement in a case that alleged Westchester County, New York, had made false claims to the Federal Government when it certified that it would affirmatively further fair housing, even though it had never analyzed racial segregation patterns in areas where it placed new affordable housing. Under the settlement, Westchester County must build new affordable housing units in locations that are currently less than 3 percent African American and 7 percent Hispanic. HUD and Westchester County are working together to ensure that this settlement produces real change in the county. While addressing discrimination and segregation are integral parts of ensuring equal housing opportunity, we know that economic opportunities are equally critical to making neighborhoods open to all persons.

REMEMBER -

**FAIR HOUSING IS NOT AN
OPTION... IT'S THE LAW!**

Please contact us at, 491 Double Springs Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101, 270.782.7900