



Fair Housing Enforcement Program

October 2016

Volume 3, Issue 9

Aloha from FHEP!



Fair Housing Enforcement Program at our annual Strategic Planning Retreat

Every year the Fair Housing Enforcement Program (FHEP) retreats from our headquarters on Bethel Street to evaluate the past year and make goals for the upcoming one. During the 2015 Strategic Planning Meeting, FHEP decided to focus on reaching out to the COFA community, public housing residents, homeless shelters, and the LGBTQ community. We are happy to report progress in all four strategic areas, but mostly with our program's achievement in helping the COFA community with language access in public housing and doing general "know-your-rights" workshops throughout Oahu so that COFA citizens are better able to understand their rights and responsibilities when it comes to rental housing in Hawaii.

During the 2016 meeting, our team has decided to refine and continue our strategic efforts with the COFA, homeless, LGBTQ, and public housing communities. In addition, we have created a new strategic area focusing on mental health so that our team is better equipped to assist individuals in crisis and ensure that

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About Us

The Fair Housing Enforcement Program (FHEP) is a project of the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii. Our mission is to promote fair housing and end housing discrimination through education, advocacy, outreach, and litigation.

All people in Hawaii have the right to make housing choices without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, familial status, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, or HIV infection.

If you believe you have been denied access to housing because of discrimination, you may call the FHEP Hotline at **808-527-8024** or from the Neighbor Islands, **866-527-3247**. Leave a message and our Intake Specialist will call to

those who have psychological disabilities are able to have access to justice and other social services. We look forward to working on our strategic plan during the next 12 months!

Our job would be even more difficult without the cooperation of our partners and other community organizations. If you belong to an organization that works in one of the above areas and would like to reach out, please call our hotline or reach us through our website.

Mahalo nui loa,

The Fair Housing Enforcement Program

Fair Housing is our kuleana, our right and responsibility. Have you ever felt discriminated against by a housing provider based on your national origin, your familial status, your sex, etc? Share your story with us! **#FairHousingIsOurKuleana**



Important News from HUD



WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has recently released important memos in the areas of harassment based on a protected class status, discrimination against victims of domestic violence, gender identity, and language access.

- On September 13, 2016 HUD published a final rule formalizing legal standards under the Fair Housing Act (FHA) for sexual and other forms of harassment in housing. In addition, HUD issued a FHA guidance on local 'nuisance ordinances' that may lead to housing discrimination against

schedule an interview.

One of our staff attorneys will then review your case and determine whether we will be able to provide assistance.

survivors of domestic violence and other persons in need of emergency services. **Check out HUD's final rule on harassment by clicking [here](#).** To read the FHA guidance on nuisance laws against victims of domestic violence, **click here.**

- On September 15, 2016 HUD issued a "Limited English Proficiency" (LEP) guidance that addresses how the Fair Housing Act (FHA) would apply to claims of housing discrimination brought by the people (more than 25 million people) because they do not speak, read, or write English proficiently. While English proficiency is not a protected class under the federal FHA, it is commonly tied to cases of national origin discrimination, making LEP within the Act's protections. For landlords, this means that it is illegal to make speaking English a requirement for housing purposes. **To read the full guidance, click here.**
- On September 20, 2016 HUD published another final rule- this time for gender identity guidelines when it comes to HUD funded single-sex transitional shelters. Previously, HUD encouraged single-sex shelters funded by their department to provide all individuals, including transgender individuals and other individuals who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth, with access to programs, benefits, services, and accommodations in accordance with their gender identity without being subjected to intrusive questioning or being asked to provide documentation. The new guidance converts HUD's previous recommendation into a requirement. **To read the full guidance, click here.**

Inspiring Fair Housing News

Honolulu High-Rise: 36 Stories and No Affordable Housing

September 7, 2016
by Anita Hofschnieder

As part of an incentive to build affordable housing units around upcoming rail transit centers in Honolulu, new laws have relaxed building density rules for new housing development. The Manaoiana Hotel Place and Residential Condominium project, which would be built

across the street from the Hawaii Convention Center, is the first to seek permission from the City Council to develop under the new laws. The project proposes to be 68 feet taller than other high-rises in the area and have a mix of hotel and condo units, none of which would be affordable.

Click [here](#) to read the full Civil Beat article.

UPDATE: Manaolana Project Stalled

by Anita Hofsneider

The Honolulu City Council voted to push back the decision to approve or deny permitting for the Manaolana Hotel Place and Residential Condominium project. According to the Department of Planning and Permitting, the permitting process that would relax laws around a project's building density and height made no mention of what to do with projects that's plans did not include affordable housing units. The vote to stall the project came as a relief to affordable housing advocates.

Click [here](#) to read the full Civil Beat article.

Also check out '[**City Leaders Have To Stop Turning Their Backs On Affordable Housing**](#)', an article written by the Civil Beat Editorial Board that coincides with Ms. Hofsneider's investigation into the proposed Manaolana Project.

Only 4.2% of Hawaii's Public Housing Units Are Accessible

September 12, 2016

Upon investigation into Hawaii's accessible public housing stock, only 4.2% of the state's current total public housing units are ADA compliant, meaning accessible to those living with disabilities. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, approximately 25.6% of the state's population living in poverty also reported to be living with some type of disability. The Hawaii Public Housing Authority has stated that over 100 more units are being modified to meet accessibility requirements, but even with their efforts, a huge gap remains for affordable and accessible housing.

To read the Civil Beat article by Anita Hofsneider, click [here](#).

If your interested in Hawaii's disability statistics, check out [disabilitystatistics.org](#).

Living the American Dream- It Depends on your Zip Code

America is supposed to be a place where poor kids can work their way out of poverty through hard work; a place where poor kids can achieve the "American Dream". A study done last year by Harvard social scientists on American upward mobility has shed startling new light on children growing up in poor neighborhoods. Upward mobility, or more specifically the ability that poor children have to earn more than their poor parents did once they reach adulthood, depends very much on where they live and at what age they move from a poor neighborhood (if they're able to move at all). This leaves some Americans with a daunting reality- no matter how hard you study or work, your zip code in itself may be a poverty trap. This New York Times article written by David Leonhardt, Amanda Cox, and Claire Cain Miller is a must read.

[Click here](#) for the full story.

Tester Training for Interested Volunteers

The Fair Housing Tester Program hosts regular tester training for interested volunteers. Candidates must be 18 years and older with no previous felony record, have no open case with the Legal Aid Society, and cannot have an active real estate license.

Please call the Fair Housing Investigation Coordinator at (808) 527-8036 to register and to receive more details, or complete the online [application here](#).

October FHEP Outreaches



FHEP at the 2016 Hawaii Language Access Conference

Thursdays at St. Elizabeth's in Kalihi

The Fair Housing Enforcement Program has partnered with [We Are Oceania](#) to provide outreach, education, and on-site intake for legal assistance at St. Elizabeth's

Where:
St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church
720 N. King Street, HI 96817

When:
Thursdays from 11:30am-2:00pm

If you or anyone you know has a fair housing issue and is interested in applying for Legal Aid services, feel free to come down. A Chuukese interpreter will also be present. For more information on this outreach, please contact Madonna or Shea at (808) 527-8024.

Tuesdays and Thursdays and Next Step Shelter

Emmie Suzuki-Phillip, Fair Housing outreach specialist, will be at Next Step Shelter to provide fair housing survival tips in Chuukese and English.

Where:
Next Step Shelter
Pier 1 off of Forrest Ave.
Honolulu, HI 96813

When:
Every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:00-9:00pm

For more information, contact Emmie at 808-527-8024.

Voice of Chuuk - KNDI Radio

Tune in to [**KNDI**](#) on the second Wednesday of every month to catch our outreach specialist, Emmie, giving on-air fair housing survival tips and information with DJ Bender Sam. (Chuukese only)

Where:
KNDI Radio - 1270AM

When:
2nd Wednesday of the month from 8:30-9:30pm.

If you would like more detailed information on Emmie's fair housing outreaches, please contact her at 808-527-8024.

Want more info on Language Access? Check out our [**new brochure!**](#)

Looking for Training?

Do you work in a human services field, the health profession, or housing/real estate, or do you know of a group that could use education on their rights?

FHEP offers free trainings and workshops on fair housing. Our training options can be tailored to meet specific needs, but typically cover a range of topics from general fair housing information to specific areas such as reasonable accommodation requests, assistance animals, and others.

Please contact Madonna or Shea at (808) 527-8024 or info@fairhousinghawaii.org to schedule a free training on fair housing.

Mahalo for reading!

Legal Aid Society of Hawaii | | info@fairhousinghawaii.org | <http://www.fairhousinghawaii.org>
924 Bethel Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Please forward this email to other interested parties

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