



LEGAL AID
SOCIETY OF HAWAII



Fair Housing Enforcement Program

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Aloha!

Aloha & Happy LGBT Pride Month!

"A mahu is an individual that straddles somewhere in the middle of the male and female binary. It does not define their sexual preference or gender expression, because gender roles, gender expressions and sexual relationships have all been severely influenced by the changing times. It is dynamic. It is like life."

-Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, a Native Hawaiian LGBT activist.

Quick Links

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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



In Hawaii sexual orientation and gender identity became protected classes as applied to housing in 2005.

Sexual orientation and gender identity are protected classes in Hawai'i. The month of June is as great a time as ever to help spread the word about issues that the LGBT+ community faces when it comes to renting and buying homes.

The Fair Housing Act makes it illegal for a housing provider to refuse to rent or to take any other kind of discriminatory action against a gay or transgender person based on their sexual orientation. If you know someone who has experienced discrimination or want to team up with the Fair Housing Enforcement Program in order to educate the LGBT+ community of their housing rights here in Hawaii, then give us a shout out on our social media or on our [website](#).



Fair Housing is our kuleana, our right and responsibility.

schedule an interview.

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

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! [#FairHousingsOurKuleana](#)

Inspiring Fair Housing News

The Triumphs of Testing

May 9, 2016

Fair Housing Testing is a tool that many advocacy groups around the nation (including our own!) use to catch housing discrimination before it happens, instead of waiting for complaints to be filed to take action. In 1982 the Supreme Court ruled that fair housing testing was not entrapment, but was a legal means of uncovering pervasive discrimination in our communities. A recent HUD complaint was filed against an apartment complex in Indiana as a result of paired testing that revealed discrimination against disabled people with assistance animals. When the disabled applicant (tester) asked about having his companion animal in the unit, the apartment worker informed him that it was a cats-only building. This sort of answer is taken as a refusal to the disabled applicant's reasonable accommodation request. The HUD complaint has been withdrawn after the apartment complex and complainants reached a confidential settlement agreement. Moving forward, the apartment complex has agreed to having their employees attend training as approved by the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. Click [here](#) to read more.

FHA Violations Amid City Housing Inspections

May 10, 2016

A group of mostly Latino residents from a mobile home park in Richmond, VA have reached a settlement with the City of Richmond in a housing discrimination lawsuit where the complainants alleged that the city pursued an aggressive housing code enforcement campaign by having inspectors show up at their mobile home park unannounced and with armed escorts in order to do home inspections. These inspectors later condemned some of the homes on the basis that they didn't meet unrealistic standards. A part of the complaint alleged that City officials refused to provide Spanish language interpretation services for the Spanish speaking residents, a violation under the Fair Housing Act. As part of the settlement, the City has agreed to set forth \$40,000 to help aid residents with relocation expenses or to make repairs to their mobile homes which will allow them to pass code enforcement. To read more,

click [here](#).

Cause and Effect: Insuring Discrimination

May 17, 2016

The National Fair Housing Alliance in Washington D.C. filed a suit against Travelers Indemnity Company, a major insurance company, alleging that the company refused to insure buildings that had occupants which relied on housing assistance programs to pay rent. This blanket denial has resulted in a deficiency of affordable housing in D.C., where as a result building owners are refusing to rent to housing voucher holders. The NFHA, during a 10-month long investigation, conducted six tests against Travelers Indemnity where testers posed as building owners and sought coverage for well-maintained buildings in poor, largely African American neighborhoods where there would likely be tenants who use housing vouchers. All six testers were denied coverage and were eventually told that it was because some of their residents relied on housing assistance vouchers to pay rent. The lawsuit is currently ongoing but to read more, click [here](#).

#airbnbwhileblack

May 22, 2016

Airbnb, the modern vacation rental site, is being criticized today over allegations that the company violates fair housing laws. One customer, a black man, has complained in a class-action lawsuit, that his application for stay was denied based on the fact that the homeowner could view profile information of his that revealed his race, among other things. After being denied, this customer created separate accounts under generally white sounding names (like Todd and Jesse) that left out personal profile information. These applications were eventually approved on the site, fueling claims of discrimination against African Americans in the ongoing class-action lawsuit against Airbnb. To read more, click [here](#).

Family Discrimination in Nevada's Capital

May 27, 2016

After consistently posting advertisements showing their preference for adult renters only, Betty Brinson and Hughston Brinson eventually got a reputation for not renting to families with children. This reputation eventually got the best of them after they posted an ad in their local newspaper for a single family home that indicated a preference for adult tenants only. When a family viewed the property and expressed interest in applying, they were refused outright on the basis of

having minor children. This family filed a complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which led to a lawsuit against the Brinson's. The Justice Department recently announced a settlement agreement where the Brinson's have agreed to pay \$14,000 to the HUD complainants, \$10,000 into a fund for additional victims, and \$12,000 to the U.S. as a civil penalty. For more info, click [here](#).

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](#).

June FHEP Outreaches



FHEP at Celebrate Micronesia!

The Fair Housing Enforcement Program has partnered with [We Are Oceana](#) to provide outreach, education, and on-site intake for legal assistance every Thursday from 11:30am-2:00pm at St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church in Kalihi.

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 Shea at (808) 527-8017.

Training Opportunities

Looking for training on the Fair Housing Act?

FHEP offers free training on fair housing. Our training seminar options cover a range of topics from general fair housing information to specific areas such as reasonable accommodation requests, assistance animals, and others. Please contact Shea at (808) 527-8017 to schedule a free training on fair housing.

Mahalo for reading!

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Please forward this email to other interested parties

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