



Fair Housing Enforcement Program

Recap of April 2017 | Fair Housing Month

Volume 4, Issue 4

Aloha from FHEP!



Legal Aid Staff Compete in the Lanikai Triathlon on April 23, 2017

The Fair Housing Enforcement Program kicked into high gear last month in commemoration of national Fair Housing Month. In total, our team participated in 8 community outreach engagements, hosted 7 fair housing workshops across 5 islands, added 1 new staff member to our team, and competed in 1 triathlon race.

Mahalo to our workshop partners and the members of the public and private sectors who attended!

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

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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

status, your sex, etc? Share your story with us! [#FairHousingIsOurKuleana](#)



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

*

Legal Aid is physically accessible to those with mobility impairments.

Legal Aid can provide accommodations to deaf or hearing impaired persons. If you are deaf or hearing impaired, please contact info@fairhousinghawaii.org and we will make arrangements to meet you with a sign interpreter

Mayor's Proclamation Ceremony



Honolulu, HI

Mayor Kirk Caldwell met with housing advocates on April 3, 2017 to sign the annual City & County of Honolulu Fair Housing Proclamation. The proclamation affirms Honolulu's dedication to creating fair and equal housing opportunities across the island of O'ahu.

Mahalo for a Successful Fair Housing Month!

Fair Housing: Our Kuleana



From L to R: Marcus Kawatichi of HI Civil Rights Commission, Jacky Moses of FHEP, Jelani Madaraka of HUD, Reyna Ramolete of FHEP, and Stephen Karel and John Chang of C&C of Honolulu.

The State of Hawaii's local HUD office, the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission, and the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii's Fair Housing Enforcement Program joined forces last month with the Counties of Kauai, Honolulu,

Maui, and Hawai'i Island to offer free fair housing law workshops to housing consumers and professionals.

It was a great experience to come together with our community partners in the communities that we serve to educate people on federal and state fair housing laws and shed light on the nuances and intricacies of analyzing the law and practicing under it.

At the workshops, the FHEP shared with the groups that while our program funds are reserved to assist victims of discrimination, we can still provide technical assistance on fair housing law provided that there are no conflicts of interest. To ask a question, or find helpful information on how to navigate fair housing laws as a housing provider, visit our website fairhousinghawaii.org.

A Fair Housing Workshop for the island of Lana'i is still in the works. You and others who are interested can stay updated on the date and registration details by:

- contacting the County of Maui Fair Housing Officer at 808-270-7351;
- visiting fairhousinghawaii.org;
- [signing up for our monthly newsletter](#).

Tester Training for Interested Volunteers

Wanna Add Investigative Work to Your Resume?

Inspector Clouseau had to get his start somewhere. Get the skills you need to take your under-cover potential to the next level - and make a real difference in making Hawaii a fairer place to live! Our **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. No experience necessary.

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

News from HUD



HUD Deputy Secretary Nominated

President Trump nominated **Pamela Hughes Patenaude** as HUD's Deputy Secretary under Secretary Ben Carson. The nominee, Ms. Patenaude, has 30 years of experience in housing policy and comes from her role as president of the J. Ronald Terwilliger Foundation for Housing America's Families, a nonprofit dedicated to illuminating the affordable housing crisis in America.

Inspiring Fair Housing News

Greenlight from SCOTUS

The Supreme Court has ruled that the city of Miami, Florida has claim to sue Bank of America and Wells Fargo under the federal Fair Housing Act for egregious mortgage lending to minority communities leading up to the 2008 national foreclosure crisis. Lawyers for Miami argue that due to the banks' predatory lending, the city has suffered a loss in property tax revenue and has had to expend resources to help manage communities hit hardest by the foreclosure crisis - communities which are disproportionately black and Latino.

After making the decision, SCOTUS has sent Bank of America v. Miami and Wells Fargo v. Miami back to the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit, in Atlanta. FHEP will be following these cases and will provide updates as they happen.

[Click here](#) for the New York Times article *Supreme Court Rules Miami Can Sue for Predatory Lending*.

California & Airbnb Agree to Undergo Periodic Fair Housing Testing

The short-term rental site, Airbnb, has been the target of fair housing lawsuits and complaints in recent years as it was revealed in the media that hosts on the platform could easily pick and choose who they allow to stay in their rentals based on the renter's profile photo. The

California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) filed a complaint against Airbnb last year for alleged violations of the Fair Housing Act based on race after receiving complaints from African-American housing consumers on the site who felt rejected based on their skin color and/or "African-American sounding" name. Recently the host site voluntarily agreed to fair housing testing for hosts in California who have three or more listings. This new agreement will allow trained individuals to pose as rental-seekers on the site in order to test for discriminatory treatment. This is big for Airbnb and its hosts, who have long held that the Fair Housing Act cannot apply to their rentals because of the nature of their short-term residency.

To read more from housingwire.com, [click here](#).

To see the agreement between DFEH and Airbnb, [click here](#).

Court Rules that LGBT Couples are Protected

In a Colorado court, a federal court has ruled - for the first time in history - that LGBT couples are covered under the federal Fair Housing Act (FHA) based on their sex and gender identity. The FHA covers race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and familial status. This means that housing consumers across the country are protected from differential treatment based on their membership in the above classes. Sexual orientation in Hawaii is a protected class status, but federally it is not. Nevertheless, the court has ruled that the protected class "sex" includes gender identity and sexual stereotypes - things like how men and women should dress, talk, act, and who they should admire. Tonya and Rachel Smith, a gay couple with two minor children, were denied a single-family home in Boulder, CO based on their "unique relationship". Rachel is a transgender woman and the landlord admitted that allowing the couple to rent the home with their children would raise gossip and would mean that she'd have to give up her "low-profile" as a landlord.

The Smiths sued the landlord, Deepika Avanti, in U.S. District Court and Denver Judge Raymond P. Moore entered a favorable ruling for the Plaintiffs on May 3, 2017. Since the landlord never contested the facts in court, it is not likely that she will be able to appeal the decision.

To read the Washington Post article *Federal fair housing law protects LGBT couples, court rules for the first time*, [click here](#).



Legal Aid staff and fair housing attorney, Reyna Ramolette Hayashi, at the 2017 Celebrate Micronesia event.

Weinberg Village Waimanalo

The FHEP will be holding outreach and intake services at Weinberg Village in Waimanalo on the first Friday of every month.

Where:

Weinberg Village Waimanalo
41-490 Saddle City Rd, Waimanalo, HI 96795
Accommodations can be made for physically impaired persons.
Contact Jacky at **808-527-8028**.

When:

First Friday of the Month
9:30 am - 12:00 pm

St. Elizabeth's on Thursdays



The FHEP, partnered with **We Are Oceania**, has resumed regular outreach at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in Kalihi. A Chuukese interpreter will be available.

Where:

720 N. King St.
Honolulu, HI 96817

*WAO office located on makai/Diamond Head side of church
Accommodations can be made for physically impaired persons.
Contact Jacky at **808-527-8028**.

When:
Every Thursday
9:00-11:00 AM.

Voice of Chuuk - KNDI Radio

Tune in to **KNDI** on 'Micronesian Radio Saturdays' to catch our outreach specialist, Jacky, giving on-air fair housing survival tips and information. (Chuukese language only)

Where:
KNDI Radio - 1270AM

When:
May 6th from 3-4pm.

Voice of Chuuk - Bender Sam
Sat. 3:00 - 4:00 PM

If you know of a community or organization that FHEP should be outreaching to/with, please contact our outreach specialist at:

info@fairhousinghawaii.org

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!

Please forward this email to other interested parties

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