



Fair Housing Enforcement Program

January 2016

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Aloha!



Dr. King and Coretta Scott King
Grant Park 1966, Chicago, Illinois

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MLK Jr. Chicago Freedom March 1966.

Aloha and thanks for reading! 2016 is off to an incredible start with lots of exciting updates related to Fair Housing cases across the country.

We are very happy to welcome a new addition to our team. **Britta Johnson**, a recent graduate of the University of New Haven, will join the FHEP testing unit as our new Investigation Coordinator. Welcome Britta!

As always, be sure to check out our [website](#) for more program updates and resources. To connect with us on social media, check out:

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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.



Fair Housing is our kuleana. 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! [#FHKuleana](#)

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.
(January 15, 1929 - April 4, 1968)



"I Have a Dream" Speech
Martin Luther King Jr.
August 28, 1963

On Monday, January 18th, we honored the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. for his profound crusade for freedom and equality in the 1960's Civil Rights Movement, a movement which culminated in the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. As many of you know, the Civil Rights Act of 1968 includes the Fair Housing Act (Title VIII), which outlaws discrimination in any housing transaction based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. If it were not for Dr. King's determined efforts, the Civil Rights Act and the Fair Housing Act may never have come to fruition. Disability and familial status are now included among the original five protected classes. Today, Dr. King's dream lives on through the efforts of various civil rights and fair housing organizations across the nation.

Recent Fair Housing News

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

Taking Advantage of Hispanic Homeowners

January 12, 2016

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing transactions based on national origin. This month, three Modesto, California home loan modification companies have been charged by HUD for unfairly targeting Hispanic homeowners by enticing them into home loan audits, which were never delivered, and modification services that were valueless through deceptive advertising and false representation. The firms promoted their services in Spanish language only, promising struggling homeowners that their interest rates and overall debt would decrease. For some of the victims, their homes were foreclosed as little as nine months after signing up for services with these firms.

Sex-for-Repair isn't Fair

January 12, 2016

19 women and counting are accusing maintenance workers employed by Baltimore City Housing of sexual harassment for responding to the tenants' requests for repairs with their own requests for sexual favors. When the women would not comply with the maintenance workers' demands, their requests for repairs were subsequently ignored, causing these women and their families to live in conditions involving mold, pest infestations, minimal heat during cold weather months, and even risk of electrocution. The proposed settlement- a record 7.9 million- is being called historical and the largest Fair Housing case of its kind related to sexual harassment. Baltimore City Housing has fired all of the accused workers involved; there is also a pending criminal investigation against the abusers.

Pitbull Discrimination

January 12, 2016

A family is suing the city of Jacksonville, Florida over the confiscation of their disabled daughter's emotional support dog, a pitbull named Edith. The City has an ordinance banning pitbulls outright. The family argues that the City has violated the Fair Housing Act by seizing the dog. They hope to prove that the dog provides a medical service to their daughter, who has Asperger's Syndrome, and that without the dog in their home, their child's condition is becoming worse.

University to Pay \$145K in Student Housing
Discrimination Case

January 11, 2016

The Justice Department has settled a case with Kent State University in Ohio, after charges were brought against the school for violating rights of disabled students to have an emotional support animal with them in the student's on-campus housing. In addition to the monetary settlement, Kent State has agreed to change its policy to accommodate similar requests going forward.

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](#).

January FHEP Outreaches

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 10:00am-12:00pm 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 Madonna at (808) 527-8083.

Employment Opportunities

We are hiring two new positions! Click the links for more details and info on how to apply.

[Fair Housing Outreach Specialist](#)

[Fair Housing Investigation Volunteer Coordinator](#)

Training Opportunities

Look 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 Madonna at (808) 527-8083 to schedule a free training on fair housing.

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Please forward this email to other interested parties