



THE RESIDENT

NEWSLETTER

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UPCOMING DATES

- » **Healthy Neighborhoods webinar**
Healthy Aging
March 15, 2011 – 2pm-3:30pm
<http://bit.ly/eKpekq>
- » **Tax Day: April 15, 2011**
For information on free tax help:
<http://bit.ly/qO22>
and The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, 1-800-906-9887.
- » **Rachel Carson Sense of Wonder Contest**
Sponsored by the U.S. EPA, Generations United, the Dance Exchange, National Center for Creative Aging, and the Rachel Carson Council, Inc.
June 10, 2011
<http://bit.ly/gKsKeo>

HUD Acts to End Housing Discrimination for LGBT Individuals



HUD works to ensure every resident's right to fair housing.

HUD recently proposed a new rule to ensure that its primary housing programs are open to all eligible persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. "This is a fundamental issue of fairness," said HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan. "With this proposed rule, we will make clear that a person's eligibility for Federal housing programs is, and should be, based on their need and not on their sexual orientation or gender identity."

The majority of HUD's rental programs already broadly define "family" to include a single person and families with or without children. The rule clarifies that all otherwise eligible families, regardless of marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity of any family members, have the opportunity to participate in HUD programs.

For public housing residents or applicants, this rule would make it illegal for public housing agencies (PHAs) to ask them or any member of their household about their sexual orientation or gender identity. The policy also applies to housing with financing insured by HUD and HUD homeownership programs, including the Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance programs, community development programs, and other assisted housing programs.

"There is little more central to every person's life than housing, but many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and their families continue to face discrimination in finding and keeping a home," said Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign President—a national LGBT advocacy group. "We thank Secretary Donovan and the Department of Housing and Urban Development for taking this important step forward."

Last year HUD began to move toward this goal by issuing new guidance that treats discrimination based on gender nonconformity or sex stereotyping as sex discrimination under the Fair Housing Act. HUD staff must inform individuals filing complaints about State and local protections. Approximately 20 States and the District of Columbia, as well as over 150 cities, towns, and counties across the nation, specifically prohibit such discrimination against LGBT individuals.

To view the rule visit: <http://bit.ly/hwKqR7>

Public comment on the proposed rule is due on March 25, 2011; submit comments on proposed rule FR 5359 by visiting: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Comments may be mailed to: The Regulations Division, Office of General Council, HUD, 451-7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410-0500.

Fair Housing Time Line

This timeline highlights some fair housing laws and activities that are important for public housing residents:

- 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968)**
Forbids discrimination in the rental of housing, and in other housing-related activities, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability.
- 1968 Architectural Barriers Act**
Requires that buildings and facilities designed, constructed, changed, or leased with certain Federal funds must be accessible to and useable by handicapped persons.
- 1969 Fair housing formal complaint process instituted**
- 1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments Act**
Forbids discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance.
- 1973 Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act**
Forbids discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- 1975 Age Discrimination Act**
Forbids discrimination based on age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.
- 1988 Fair Housing Act amendments**
Increase HUD's enforcement role, adding criminal penalties.
- 1990 Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act**
Forbids discrimination based on disability in programs, services, and activities provided or made available by public entities. HUD uses this law to enforce equality in state and local public housing and housing assistance.
- 1995 Housing for Older Persons Act**
Allows some housing to be just for seniors 55 and older.
- 2010 Gender nonconformity or sex stereotyping is considered sex discrimination**
Discrimination based on gender nonconformity or sex stereotyping is considered sex discrimination under the Fair Housing Act. HUD staff must inform individuals filing complaints about State and local protections.
- 2011 Regulations on discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity**
Proposed regulations will forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in its housing programs.

TIPS

How to File a Discrimination Complaint

It is against Federal law to discriminate in the rental or purchase of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status, or disability. Some State laws also prohibit discrimination related to sexual orientation or gender identity. An example of possible discrimination might include if you set up an appointment on the telephone to see an apartment, but when you arrive, you are told that the apartment is rented. Another example might be if you are told that as a person using a wheel chair, your security deposit would be higher. In some places, if a landlord tells you that an apartment is not available for single-sex partners, it may be considered discrimination.

If you have been trying to rent a home or apartment and you believe your rights have been violated, you can file a fair housing complaint. There are several ways to do so:

- Use HUD's online form at: <http://bit.ly/gK6671>
- Call HUD toll-free at 1(800) 669-9777
- Print a form from <http://bit.ly/hyBVwt>, complete it, and mail it to:

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Room 5204
451 Seventh St., SW
Washington, DC 20410-2000

- Write a letter to your nearest Fair Housing Hub.

For the address of your local Hub, see: <http://bit.ly/hpLGYh>. The letter should include your name and address, the name and address of the person your complaint is about, the address of the house or apartment you were trying to rent, a short description of the incident that occurred, and the date it happened.

If you do not hear from HUD or a State or local fair housing agency within 3 weeks after you send in your complaint, you may call, email, or write the nearest Fair Housing Hub to check on the status of your complaint.

Contact us:

Public and Indian Housing Information Resource Center (PIH IRC)
2614 Chapel Lake Drive
Gambrells, MD 21054
Toll free number: 1-800-955-2232
Fax number: 1-443-302-2084
E-mail: pihirc@firstpic.org
(Put "Resident Newsletter" in subject line)

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www.hud.gov

Visit the archive: <http://bit.ly/fpcBhE>
Send your comments/ story ideas to: TheResident@HUD.gov

HELP CORNER

Bring Father's Day 2011 to Your Community

HUD is inviting PHAs to participate in **Father's Day 2011** on June 18. The first "Fatherhood Initiative Day," put on by the New York City Housing Authority, attracted over 100 people for food, fun, and information from local service providers. Father's Day 2011 will also bring fathers and their children together to celebrate fatherhood and family, while also linking fathers to local resources. If your community wants to participate, contact your PHA. Watch *The Resident* for more information.