



Fair Housing Newsletter

Keeping you current on fair housing news and issues



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Insurance Policy May Violate Fair Housing Laws

A Maryland landlord and his insurance company have settled a lawsuit filed by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, alleging the landlord refused the accommodation of an ESA because of an insurance policy.

The applicant in this case was disabled and sought to live with her assistance animals as an accommodation. However, she was denied the ability to move in because of the breed of her assistance animals. The landlord stated that the insurance policy covering the property would be cancelled if they allowed the animals on the property. The applicant was without a place to live for a year.

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights' Office of General Counsel took legal action, suing both the housing provider and the insurance company. The Commission argued that when an insurance policy effectively blocks access to housing, it is not neutral; it is discriminatory in impact and unlawful in effect. The Court agreed and denied the insurance company's Motion to Dismiss affirming that insurers may be held accountable when their policies make housing unavailable.

The case has been settled for \$45,000. The landlords and the insurance company must also provide training for their employees.

Note From the Editor: The month of May has finally arrived and summer is just around the corner. If you missed a webinar this year, you can still purchase the recording. Let me know if which webinar you want to watch and I can send you a link. Have a great month!



Arkansas Jury Awards Tenant \$300K for Sexual Harassment



A federal judge in Arkansas has entered an order consistent with a jury verdict entering judgment in favor of a resident who alleged she was sexually harassed. The verdict awards the resident \$100,000 against the Management Company and \$200,000 against the landlord personally. This serves as a reminder that landlords, managers and maintenance employees may be personally liable under fair housing laws.

VAWA Case Settles for \$25,000

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and a New Hampshire landlord have settled a claim alleging violations of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA). The cost of settlement? \$25,000.

The lawsuit alleges the landlord violated VAWA when it unlawfully penalized a resident by evicting her after she sought police assistance for domestic violence. The case was referred to the DOJ after the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) received a complaint, conducted an investigation, and issued a charge of discrimination.

The settlement requires the landlord to pay \$25,000, to comply with VAWA and prohibits the landlord from making adverse credit reports regarding the resident's tenancy. Plus, if the landlord acquires rental properties during the three-year term of the settlement, they must report those acquisitions to the DOJ and undergo VAWA training.

Kentucky Landlord pays \$510,000 to Settle Sexual Harassment Case

A Kentucky Landlord has settled a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by the U.S. Department of Justice alleging he sexually harassed multiple tenants in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

The lawsuit, filed in 2024, alleged the landlord sexually harassed female tenants for decades, including: offering to forgive rent in exchange for sexual contact; demanding sexual contact; subjecting tenants to unwelcome sexual touching; making unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances; letting himself into female tenants' homes without notice or permission; and threatening to evict tenants who refused his demands. The lawsuit also alleged the landlord failed to stop his employees when they engaged in similar conduct.

The landlord has agreed to pay \$500,000 to tenants who were harmed and a \$10,000 civil penalty to the United States. He will also be permanently barred from managing residential rental properties and from contacting tenants harmed by his harassment.

This settlement is part of the DOJ's Sexual Harassment in Housing Initiative launched in October 2017. Since launching the initiative, the DOJ has filed 52 lawsuits alleging sexual harassment in housing and recovered over \$19 million for victims of harassment.





HOUSING CROSSROADS

WHERE FAIR HOUSING AND
LANDLORD TENANT LAWS INTERSECT

Housing Crossroads Webinar

Six Common Areas

Where Landlord / Tenant Laws and Fair Housing Laws Intersect

May 27, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. central

For years, housing providers have known that they can non-renew a lease under state law for any reason, or no reason at all. But did you know that this practice may result in liability under the federal Fair Housing Act? With every action they take, housing providers, property owners, and their management company and staff must remember that state laws regarding the landlord/tenant relationship, and Fair Housing regulations will both apply to the decisions that are made.

In this webinar, we will discuss six common areas where these laws intersect and where Fair Housing complaints are most prevalent.

1. Non-Renewals
2. Domestic Violence
3. Animals
4. Housekeeping
5. Criminal Activity
6. Late Payment of Rent

\$34.99
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Nathan Lybarger
Law Office of Hall &
Associates

Speakers



Angelita Fisher
Law Office of Angelita E.
Fisher

HUD NEWS!

Real Estate Agents who provide prospective homebuyers with information about school quality and crime data do not violate the Fair Housing Act when the information is shared consistently without discriminatory intent. It is unclear if the same logic applies to multifamily rental housing.

Income Discrimination Case Settles for \$540,000

The Fair Housing Justice Center has announced it has reached a settlement in a source of income case it filed in 2023 alleging a New York City real estate agency and various New York City property managers violated state law by refusing Section 8 vouchers.

The case began with the Fair Housing Justice Center conducted an investigation using testers who contacted real estate agents to inquire about apartment listings. The testers alleged they were treated differently based on whether they claimed to be using housing vouchers to pay their rent. While denying the allegations, the agents and property managers agreed to pay \$540,000 in damages and will participate in training for all employees, independent contractors and agents who have any contact with potential tenants.

On the hills of settling one lawsuit, the Fair Housing Justice Center has announced it has filed a new lawsuit alleging income discrimination against five different apartment buildings in Brooklyn and Queens. New York state law prohibits discrimination based on income.



Fair Housing Webinar

"You Can't Ask Me That Question"

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Central

Every property manager has wondered if they violated fair housing laws when they asked an applicant or resident a question. Are you disabled? Do you have any animals? Have you been convicted of a felony?

In this webinar, we will discuss some common questions and whether or not they are off-limits for property staff. Our topics will include questions about:

- Previous residency
- Disabilities
- Animals
- Criminal history
- Family make-up
- And much, much, more

\$24.99

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