

REGION VI FAIR HOUSING MONTH NEWSLETTER



OFFICE OF FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
US Department of Housing and Urban Development



Fair Housing: MORE THAN JUST WORDS

April 2021



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Combating and Preventing Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation
- Fair Housing Month Events in April

WELCOME SECRETARY MARCIA L. FUDGE

On March 10, 2021, Marcia L. Fudge was sworn in as the eighteenth Secretary of HUD. Secretary Fudge served as U.S. Representative for the 11th Congressional District of Ohio from 2008 to March 9, 2021. She was a member of several Congressional Caucuses and past Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. Prior to her Congressional tenure, Secretary Fudge was elected in 1999 to serve as the first female and first African American mayor of Warrensville Heights, Ohio, a position she held for two terms.

Under Secretary Fudge's leadership, the Department of Housing and Urban Development will work to eradicate the growing homelessness issue, put an end to discriminatory practices in the housing market, and ensure that our fair housing rules are doing what they are supposed to do: opening the door for families who have been systematically locked out for generations to buy homes and have a fair shot at achieving the American dream.

Secretary Fudge's first remarks following her swearing in are available to watch [here](#).



FHEO LEADERSHIP UPDATES

Acting Assistant Secretary Jeanine Worden



As FHEO's attorney in the Office of General Counsel in Headquarters since 2011, Ms. Worden has a deep appreciation for FHEO's fair housing and civil rights mission. Under Ms. Worden's leadership as Acting Assistant Secretary, HUD was the first federal agency to formally implement President Biden's Executive Order 13988 on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation.

Ms. Worden received her J.D. from Columbia University School of Law, masters degrees from Middlebury College and The Johns Hopkins University, and an undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago. She is a member of the Virginia, District of Columbia, and Maryland bars.

Regional Director Christina Lewis



Ms. Lewis currently serves as the FHEO Regional Director for Region VI. She started her federal career as a Presidential Management Intern with HUD in 1999. As the FHEO Director for the Houston and San Antonio offices, she oversaw enforcement and programs for 113 Texas jurisdictions.

Ms. Lewis earned an undergraduate degree from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, a Master's degree in Public Policy from Rockefeller College at the State University of New York, and recently completed Harvard's Senior Executive Fellowship Program.

Ms. Lewis is an avid marathoner and triathlete who has completed 5 marathons and over 20 half-marathons around the country.

Center Director Patrick Banis



Mr. Banis joined HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in 2002, after working at the Austin Tenants' Council, which is a HUD-funded Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) designed to prevent or eliminate discriminatory housing practices.

Mr. Banis holds a B.A. in Public Justice from St. Mary's University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas School of Law.

INTAKE BRANCH CHIEF

Kimone Paley

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM

COMPLIANCE BRANCH

Bonita Howard

ENFORCEMENT BRANCH CHIEFS

Robert Avila

Patricia Miskovich

FHEO FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR

Kimberly Parker (New Orleans Field Office)

FHEO FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR

Glenda Shepherd (Houston & San Antonio Field Office)





COMBATING AND PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER IDENTITY OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The LGBTQ community is now protected under the Fair Housing Act as an extension of the Act's longstanding protection against sex discrimination. The impetus for this change is the Supreme Court ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, 590 U.S. (2020), an employment discrimination case filed under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In that case, the Court held that discriminatory actions taken by an employer based on an employee's gender identity or sexual orientation cannot be made without considering sex, and such actions were also discrimination on the basis of sex.

Following the Supreme Court's decision, President Biden issued Executive Order 13988 on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation (January 20, 2021). E.O. 13988 mandates all Federal agencies to ensure the Supreme Court's decision is applied to every statute prohibiting sex discrimination. On February 11, 2021, Jeanine M. Worden, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, released a Memorandum on Implementation of Executive Order 13988 on the Enforcement of the Fair Housing Act to HUD FHEO, FHIPs, and FHAPs requiring immediate action to accept for filing complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity as sex discrimination under the Fair Housing Act.

While this memorandum was released on February 11, 2020, it is retroactive to January 20th. All FHEO Regional Offices, FHAP agencies and FHIP grantees were given 30 days to review records and ensure inquiries involving gender identity or sexual orientation on or after January 20, 2021 are reviewed in accordance with E. O. 13988.

If you have any questions about these changes to the Fair Housing Act, please contact Region VI's main hotline for FHEO at (817) 978-5900 or (800) 669-9777. You may also visit our website at hud.gov/fairhousing.

From Memorandum "At the core of this Department's housing mission is an endeavor to ensure that all people peacefully enjoy a place they call home, where they are safe and can thrive, free from discrimination and fear. Yet, this ideal remains unrealized for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer-identifying persons, who have been denied the constitutional promise of equal protection under the law throughout most of American history. Courts and governments have routinely withheld legal legitimacy from loving couples because of their sex and denied many persons the freedom to express a gender that defies norms. These injustices have perpetuated across our civic institutions: the workplace, the marketplace, places of education, and many others. But among the most personal and fundamental of these institutions is housing, where, when granted the protection of fair housing law, we all can enjoy the happiness and freedom to love whom we choose and to safely express who we are"

(Jeanine M. Worden, *Memorandum, February 11, 2020*).

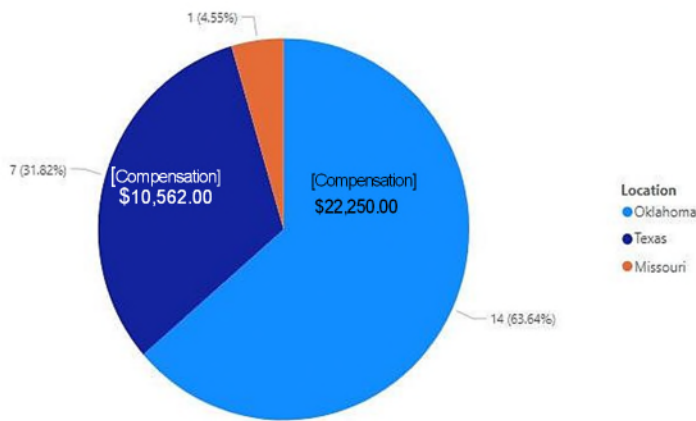
REGION VI HUD & FHAP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FHEO enforces the Fair Housing Act by investigating complaints of housing discrimination. HUD is assisted in these efforts by the state and local agencies in the Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP). Through the FHAP, HUD funds state and local agencies that administer fair housing laws that HUD has determined to be substantially equivalent to the Fair Housing Act.

REGION VI FHAP AGENCIES

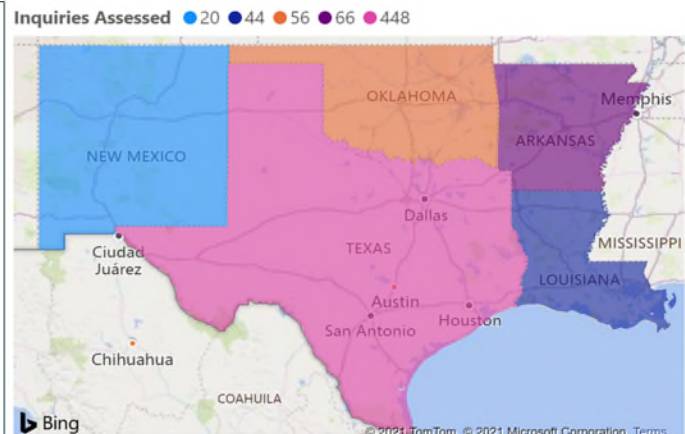
- Arkansas Fair Housing Comm.
- City of Austin Human Rights
- City of Dallas
- Corpus Christi Human Rel. Dept
- Ft Worth Human Relations Comm.
- Louisiana Dept. of Justice/PP
- Texas Workforce Commission CRD

*Half-way into the 2021 fiscal year, Region VI assessed over **630** fair housing inquiries, in which over **230** have been converted to Complaints filed.*



\$32,812.00 obtained in Monetary Relief for **28** individuals impacted by housing discrimination in Oklahoma and Texas.

22 Conciliation Agreements Achieved



R6 FHAPS	Sum of Filed Cases
Arkansas Fair Housing Comm.	17
City of Austin Human Rights	11
City of Dallas	15
Corpus Christi Human Rel. Dept	5
Ft Worth Human Relations Comm.	30
Louisiana Dept. of Justice/PP	14
Texas Workforce Commission CRD	93
Grand Total	185

NOTABLE CONCILIATIONS

Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing v. Wilhoit Properties, 06-21-9706-8

The Assistant Secretary filed this case after former HUD Secretary Carson received a letter from a concerned resident of a property in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The resident alleged that staff at two properties managed by Respondents removed religious materials from the common area of each property and had a policy of refusing to allow the display of religious materials in the common areas of the properties. To resolve the complaint, Respondents agreed to revise their policies related to the display of religious materials in common areas and inform residents of the revised policies. Additionally, the Conciliation Agreement requires staff of over 200 properties in 16 states managed or owned by Respondents Wilhoit Properties, Inc. and Vintage Housing, Inc. (LIFE Senior Services) to attend fair housing training with a focus on religious discrimination and the revised religious materials policy.

Click to read the press release: [Press Release](#)



Dymetrice Hall v. TMF Bailey, LLC et al, 06-20-7180-8

In Dymetrice Hall v. TMF Bailey, LLC et al., the complainant requested reasonable accommodation for herself and her son based on their disabilities. When the respondent did not respond to her request, the complainant contacted the Tulsa County Health Department about water damage and mold in her apartment. Subsequently, Ms. Hall filed a fair housing complaint with HUD, which the Department resolved.

In addition to (\$5,750.00) in financial settlement, the respondent agreed to complete Fair Housing training, and they will provide certificates of attendance and a completed training quiz for each staff member trained.

Kendra Willis v Chapman Crossing at Harris County, LP, et al., 06-20-7601-8

In this case, the complainant alleged prior to moving to the subject property, she was shown a unit with a roll-in shower. The complainant alleged she paid a deposit for a unit at the subject property, under the belief she was reserving a unit with a roll-in shower, which she required due to using a wheelchair as a mobility device. However, Respondents offered Complainant a unit with a garden tub at move-in, and when Complainant requested a roll-in shower, Respondents did not approve Complainant's request for more than a year. During that time, Complainant alleged she was required to shower in an ac-



cessible shower at a local community center. This complainant was resolved by Respondents agreeing to make several reasonable accommodations to Complainant's unit, attend fair housing training, and provide a sum of \$5000.00 to the Complainant for monetary relief.

George Contreras v. Durango Midrise, LP, 06-19-5674-8

In George Contreras v. Durango Midrise, LP, Complainant made several requests for reasonable accommodation/modification due to disability. Requests included being moved to a more accessible unit, having grab bars installed, and being assigned a parking space close to his unit. After making the same requests several times over the course of three months and being denied each time, the complainant had no option but to move. Mr. Contreras then filed a fair housing complaint with HUD, which was resolved.

In addition to (\$7,261.71) financial relief, the complainant will receive a neutral rental reference for 3 years. The respondent has also agreed to attend training; will develop a non-discrimination fair housing policy that will include the provision of reasonable accommodation and reasonable modification; will implement and distribute their fair housing policy, post and distribute fair housing materials; will process all requests for reasonable accommodation/modification through a section 504 Coordinator; and will generate a report of all requests for reasonable accommodation/modification received by them.

FAIR HOUSING INITIATIVE PROGRAM PARTNERS

FHIP organizations partner with HUD to help people identify government agencies that handle complaints of housing discrimination. They also conduct preliminary investigation of claims, including sending "testers" to properties suspected of practicing housing discrimination.

In addition to funding organizations that provide direct assistance to individuals who feel they have been discriminated against while attempting to purchase or rent housing, FHIP also has initiatives that promote fair housing laws and equal housing opportunity awareness.

Below is a list of Region VI FHIP organizations:

Legal Aid of Arkansas

North Texas Fair Housing Center

Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc.

San Antonio Fair Housing Council

Metropolitan Fair Housing Council of Oklahoma

Austin Tenants' Council

Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center

Greater Housing Fair Housing Center

Disability Rights Texas

Money Management International (Texas)

For more information regarding FHIP log on to:

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/partners/FHIP/fhip



These organizations continue to serve their communities on the ground through COVID-19, providing education and outreach, testing, and assisting individuals who believe they have experienced housing discrimination. THANK YOU, FHIPs!

FAIR HOUSING MONTH KICK-OFF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Federal Level Activities/Events

April 2-3, 2021

Fair Housing for Our Future: Examining Inequities and Disparities through Fair Housing Lens

Fair Housing Conference that will go over the topic "Why Systemic Investigations are Vital to Effective Fair Housing Enforcement" and will include the Acting Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity as a special guest. (www.fhconference.com)

April 14, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30pm ET

National Fair Housing Training Academy Upcoming Forum: LGBTQ+: Fostering Understanding and Strengthening Fair Housing for All

HUD and NFHTA will celebrate Fair Housing Month with a public forum focusing on preventing and combating housing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Hear from HUD leadership and national fair housing experts as they discuss how, together, we will all ensure equal access and fair housing for the LGBTQ+ community. (Click Here for Training)

April 22, 2021/10:00 am-12:00 pm CDT

PHA Fair Housing Training: Fair Housing Updates and Service and Support Animal Refresher

HUD staff from the Oklahoma and New Mexico FHEO field offices will celebrate Fair Housing Month by offering training to Public Housing Authorities in Oklahoma, New Mexico and West Texas.



TWC Civil Rights Division and TDHCA Fair Housing Webinars

The Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs are partnering to celebrate Fair Housing Month in April with a series of fair housing trainings.

April 1, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Fair Housing Overview

This training is an overview of the Federal and Texas Fair Housing Acts with discussion on common fair housing issues and discriminatory practices.

April 13, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications

This training is an in-depth review of reasonable accommodations and modifications, with guidance on how to process and fulfill requests.

April 15, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Assistance Animals

This training is an overview on HUD's new 2020 guidance on assistance animals.

April 22, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Violence Against Women Act and Fair Housing

This training is an overview of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and it's Fair Housing implications.

April 27, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Affirmative Marketing

This training is an overview on Affirmative Marketing and will also include step-by-step guidance on how to determine Least Likely to Apply Populations, as well as technical assistance on developing Affirmative Marketing Plans.

April 29, 2021/ 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Limited English Proficiency and Language Access Plans

This training is an in-depth training on the topic of Limited English Proficiency and technical guidance on how to identify LEP

Other State/Local Level Training and Events Around the Region

April 8, 2021/ 9:30 – 11:30 am

The City of Dallas Fair Housing Division Webinar: Fair Housing: Knowing Your Rights and Updates on the Law

This event is available to the general public and will provide key information regarding the Fair Housing Act and the protections the law provides as it relates potential issues regarding housing discrimination. Additionally, information will be provided on the City's partnership with Legal Aid of Northwest Texas in offering legal assistance to tenants impacted by COVID-19 that may be facing possible eviction for non-payment of rent.

To join the event, please visit <http://bit.ly/FairHousingUpdates2021>

April 8, 2021/ 9 am-4:30pm

Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana: Acknowledging Our History for the Future of Fair Housing"

(www.fhcci.org/events)

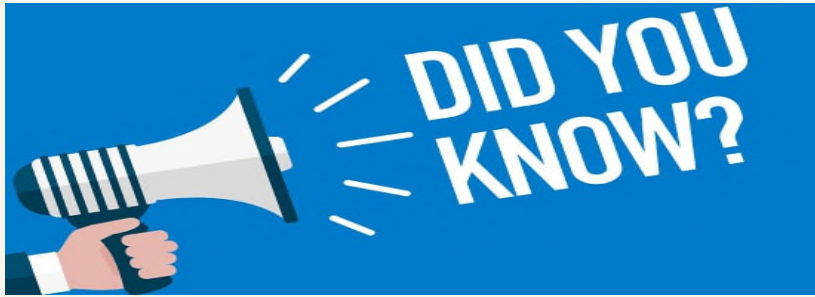
April 15, 2021

San Angelo Association of Realtors: Fair Housing Overview and How it Impacts the Real Estate Business

April 24, 2021

Southern Dallas Progress Community Development Corporation's Tenet Talk: Fair Housing Overview and How to File a Fair Housing Complaint





On Jan. 20, 2021, President Biden issued an Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (E.O. 13985), which lays out a comprehensive and systematic approach to advancing equity throughout the federal government. The Executive Order also rescinds Executive Order 13950 – Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping which banned certain types of diversity trainings.

On Jan. 26, 2021, the President signed a Memorandum on Redressing Our Nation’s and the Federal Government’s History of Discriminatory Housing Practices and Policies, directing the Secretary of HUD to examine the effects of two rules (Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” (AFFH) and Disparate Impact) and take any necessary steps to implement the Fair Housing Act in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing and prevents practices with an unjustified discriminatory effect.

Region VI

Fort Worth Regional Office of FHEO
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
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 Fort Worth, Texas 76102

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Civil Rights Complaints: ComplaintsOfficeo6@hud.gov

Other Inquiries: Look up email address by state https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/field_policy_mgt/localoffices

HELPFUL LINKS

- ⇒ **FHEO HUD Page:** https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp
- ⇒ **The State of Fair Housing Annual Report to Congress 2018-2019 Available:** [Click here](#)
- ⇒ **Most Recent Assistance Animals Guidance:** [Assistance Animal Guidance](#)
- ⇒ **Equal Housing Opportunity Logo** (Insert logo w/ link to copies that can be downloaded & printed: <https://www.hud.gov/library/bookshelf11/hudgraphics>)
- ⇒ **FHEO Resources:** https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/fair_housing_resources
- ⇒ **FHEO Guidance:** https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/fheo_guidance



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