



# FAIR HOUSING

YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE TO HOUSING NEWS, INFORMATION AND EVENTS.

July 2019

## HUD Launches Fair Housing Training Academy

The following is adapted from a [HUD Press Release](#) dated July 11, 2019.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced it is partnering with the John Marshall Law School in Chicago and Cloudburst Consulting Group, Inc., to develop the National Fair Housing Training Academy (the “Academy”). The Academy will prepare fair housing advocates, lawyers, investigators, and other stakeholders on effective strategies and techniques for addressing discriminatory housing policies and practices throughout the nation.

According to HUD, the Academy will also play a central role in providing information and instruction that will advance the

intent of the Fair Housing Act.

“HUD is taking this important step to ensure that current and future generations of young people have the tools they need to combat housing discrimination,” said HUD Secretary Ben Carson. “Today, we reaffirm our commitment to creating equal housing opportunities for every American. This commitment is just as strong today as it was in 1968 when the Fair Housing Act became the law of the land.”

In addition to providing training, the Academy will also serve as a think tank and conduit through which current and future generations of civil rights professionals share and explore

best practices and develop ways to raise industry standards. This includes creating a consistently evolving clearinghouse of fair housing education and outreach materials.

“The Academy will offer greater flexibility in how we prepare fair housing professionals to take on today’s fair housing challenges and represents an important step in training our fair housing partners around the country,” said Anna María Farías, HUD’s Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. “The teaching approaches and cutting-edge instruction will be the beginning of a process that enhances our ability to fight discrimination and ensures that fair housing remains a central tenet of the American way of life.”



## Recent HUD Enforcement Actions

**TEXAS** – HUD has charged a Plano, Texas, landlord with violating the Fair Housing Act by refusing to lease a room to a prospective tenant because she is black. [Read HUD's charge.](#)

HUD's charge alleges that in advertising on Craigslist for a room in a five-bedroom house, the landlord required applicants to identify their race and submit a photograph of themselves. When a woman who had expressed an interest in renting, contacted the landlord about the rental, he reiterated his request for a picture or "selfie." HUD's charge further alleges that although the woman refused, the landlord later agreed to meet her at the house but when he saw that she was black, he refused to show her the room, stating that her race would make his wife and the other tenants uncomfortable.

"In 2019, more than 50 years after enactment of the Fair Housing Act, it should be universally known and accepted that racial discrimination in housing is illegal and unacceptable," said Paul Compton, HUD's General Counsel. "When HUD becomes aware of such discrimination, it will aggressively pursue remedies provided for by law."

**MAINE** – In this case, HUD has charged a landlord in Clinton, Maine, and one of its agents with discrimination for denying a veteran with disabilities the right to keep his assistance animal. [Read HUD's charge.](#)

The case came to HUD's attention when a veteran with disabilities filed a complaint alleging that the landlord refused to lease an apartment to him

because he uses a dog as an assistance animal. HUD's charge alleges that tests subsequently conducted by Pine Tree Legal Assistance (PTLA), a nonprofit agency that provides free civil and legal assistance to low-income Maine residents, confirmed the landlord's policy of refusing to rent to persons with an assistance animal. In one test, a PTLA tester posing as an apartment seeker who uses an assistance animal allegedly was told that having the animal would be grounds for eviction.

**MINNESOTA** – Finally, HUD has charged the owners of several rental homes in Ottertail, Minnesota, with housing discrimination. The owners allegedly refused to allow a single mother to live with an assistance animal, a cat, for her oldest daughter, who has mental disabilities, and for terminating her lease agreement in response to the mother's reasonable-accommodation request. [Read HUD's charge.](#)

HUD's charge alleges that the owners refused to allow the assistance animal in the home, even though the woman provided documentation from her daughter's therapist attesting to the need for the assistance animal and how it addressed the girl's condition. Concurrently with the denial of the reasonable-accommodation request, the owners terminated the lease agreement before the family could even move in.

(all adapted from [HUD Press Releases](#))