

FAIR HOUSING CENTER
of Southeast &
Mid-Michigan



**The Fair Housing Center is a
private
non-profit organization.**

**We cover ten counties.
About 44% of our complaints are
Washtenaw County based**

Fair housing laws are not self-enforcing.

The NAACP-Ypsilanti/Willow run, NAACP-Ann Arbor, and the Housing Law Reform Project, along with community members concerned with civil rights, began work in 1989 to start an organization that actively protects the civil rights of those who are discriminated against in the rental, sale, or financing of housing. **We opened in 1992**

Why a Fair Housing Center?

- We take and resolve complaints of **illegal housing discrimination.**
- We fill the “**evidence gap**”

We take over 200 complaints every year.

The most common complaints are based on

- **Race**
- **Disability**
- **Source of Income**


Federal Fair Housing Act bans
discrimination based on **race, color,
religion, national origin, sex
(including sexual orientation
and gender identity),
disability, and familial status.**



The Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights
Act adds age and marital
status.

Local ordinances may cover source of income, student/non student status, and criminal background.

Fair Housing Law covers the rental, sale and financing of housing; and “otherwise make housing unavailable”



Fair Housing Services

- **Testing**
- **Investigations**
- **Reasonable Accommodations**

Testing

FHC, Ngalle v Grad Apartment



TESTING EVIDENCE

White Tester

Told white tester about 3 available apartments.

Showed white tester all 3 apartments.

Told the white tester that the phone screening was the application process.

Black Tester

Told Black tester about 1 available apartment that was in “total chaos.”

Showed Black tester 0 units.

Told the Black tester that he would have to “follow up” with where she lived before.

Investigation

Yoder v Havens



**Request for
Reasonable
Accommodation**
*The Ray family needed
an accessible home*



HUD Guidelines

**ban blanket “no felony”
policies for those who
have criminal records.**

Because the criminal justice system in the United States leans so heavily on people of color, people with felony and arrest records are more likely to be Black or Latino.



Complainant Options

- **Conciliation**
- **HUD or MDCR administrative complaint**
- **Litigation**

Race

FHC, Tester, Ngalle

\$20,000



Race, Trafficante

NAACP v Adrian Manor

\$15,000



New Construction

Lowrey v Uptown
\$227,500

FHC v Uptown
\$49,000



Retaliation

Tyus v

Fairway Trails

\$50,000



**Sexual
Harassment**
***Coats et al v
Meyers***
\$166,200



Investigation

**Scott v
Swan Creek**



Familial Status

Pippens v Trkula

\$20,000



Evictions & Fair Housing

A woman evicted because she is the victim of domestic violence, due to assailant's damage of the unit, or because she "calls the police too much."

A family evicted after the birth of a child, because the unit is "over occupied."

A Black family or tenant who is evicted after a conflict with a white tenant, while the white tenant is not evicted.

A person with a disability is evicted for noise or behavior related to their disability.

A tenant who is evicted for making a fair housing complaint to a civil rights organization.

A tenant who is evicted after new management discovers an old felony record.

Signs of Discrimination Based on Race

“I just rented the last unit”

“I lost your application”

“Your credit isn’t perfect”

Agent that strings you along until you are forced to find other housing

Racial harassment, racial comments

Employees fired for refusing to discriminate

Racially motivated eviction

Failure to do repairs

Signs of Discrimination Based on

Disability

"We only rent to working people"

"We don't take third party payments"

"Can you live independently?"

"Maybe a group home would better suit you"

"We don't allow co-signers"

REFUSAL TO MAKE A REASONABLE ACCOMODATION

Signs of Discrimination Based on
Familial Status

"We aren't set up for children "

**"Brother and sister can't share a bedroom
"**

"The unit isn't safe for children "

Stay connected to the FHC @fhcmichigan



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Michigan**

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