

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, August 30, 2016

Justice Department Settles Housing Discrimination Lawsuit Involving Seven Michigan Apartment Complexes

The Justice Department and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices of the Eastern and Western Districts of Michigan today announced an agreement with the owners and operators of seven Michigan apartment complexes to resolve allegations that they discriminated against families with children in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

The lawsuit was filed on Nov. 19, 2015, in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. The lawsuit alleged that the defendants, including the rental manager Sudi Hopper, as well as the corporate entities that own the complexes, Parkside East Inc., Holt Manor Inc. and Kelly Manor Inc., discriminated against families with children by prohibiting them from renting one-bedroom units in the defendants' apartment complexes. The allegations were based on evidence generated by the Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan, which had testers posing as prospective residents contact the defendants and ask to rent one-bedroom apartments. Testers who said that they wanted to rent an apartment with their child were told that children were not allowed in one-bedroom units. The Fair Housing Center filed a lawsuit, which was resolved separately.

Under the terms of the consent decree, which still must be approved by the court, the defendants will establish a settlement fund of \$20,000 to compensate victims of their discriminatory practices. The defendants will also pay \$5,000 in civil penalties to the United States. In addition, the defendants will eliminate the restrictions on children that they previously imposed at the seven complexes that they own and operate. Those complexes are: Parkside East Apartments in East Lansing, Michigan; Holt Manor Apartments and C and H Apartments in Holt, Michigan; Kelly Manor Apartments in Owosso, Michigan; Camelot Apartments in Lansing, Michigan; Pine Cove Apartments in DeWitt, Michigan; and Park Place Apartments in Williamston, Michigan. The agreement also requires that defendants inform tenants of their new nondiscriminatory policies and provide training on the Fair Housing Act to their staff and agents.

"Housing provides a critical foundation for economic security and opportunity," said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta, head of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "Families with children deserve access to housing that meets their needs without facing unlawful discrimination. The Justice Department will continue to enforce the Fair Housing Act to ensure that families with children have the same rights to housing within their price range as people without children."

"The law prohibits landlords from refusing to rent to people with children," said U.S. Attorney Barbara L. McQuade of the Eastern District of Michigan. "We commend the defendants in this case for agreeing to change their policies and pay damages to victims for their past discriminatory practices. This settlement will further the goal of the Fair Housing Act to protect families from discrimination because they have children."

"Adequate housing is a fundamental need for families and equal access to that housing must be protected," said U.S. Attorney Patrick A. Miles Jr. of the Western District of Michigan. "Our ongoing actions to enforce the Fair Housing Act provide that protection."

This case was handled jointly by the Civil Rights Division's Housing and Civil Enforcement Section and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices of the Eastern and Western Districts of Michigan.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin and disability. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at www.justice.gov/crt. Individuals who believe that they have been victims of housing discrimination can call the Housing Discrimination Tip Line at 1-800-896-7743, e-mail the Justice Department at fairhousing@usdoj.gov or contact HUD at 1-800-669-9777. Residents of the Eastern District of Michigan can also contact the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Eastern District of Michigan's Civil Rights Hotline at 313-226-9151 or usamie.civilrights@usdoj.gov. Residents of the Western District of Michigan can contact the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Western District of Michigan's Civil Rights Hotline at 616-808-2004 or usamiw.civilrights@usdoj.gov.

Parkside East Consent Decree

16-988

Civil Rights Division

Civil Rights - Housing and Civil Enforcement

USAO - Michigan, Eastern

USAO - Michigan, Western

Topic:

Civil Rights

Updated August 30, 2016