



Ann Arbor

Apartment managers accused of discriminating against families

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on July 13, 2016 at 2:00 PM, updated July 13, 2016 at 2:33 PM

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – A coalition of fair housing advocates has filed a fair housing complaint against an Indianapolis property management company that owns and operates more than 8,000 apartments in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Alabama.

AMP Residential engages in "systematic discrimination" against families with children in 20 properties located in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, according to the complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

Michigan properties named in the complaint include: Runaway Club, Delta Township; 43 North and Timberview, Grand Haven Township; Aspen Lakes, Central Park Place, Ridgewood, and Wyndham Hill, Grand Rapids; River Club, Holland Township; Waverly Place, Kalamazoo; Glen Oaks East, Woodbridge and Woodland Creek, Kentwood; Country Place and Stone Crest, Mount Pleasant; Spring Brook, Laketown Township (near Holland) and The Valley, Plainfield Township.

The complaint alleges their investigators found the AMP apartment complexes unlawfully refused to rent units to families with children.

"AMP Residential has a stated occupancy standard of no more than two people per bedroom in each apartment or townhome, regardless of the unit's square footage or whether that unit has a den, office, or other feature that could provide an additional bedroom or living area for a child," the groups said in a news release on Wednesday, July 13.

"AMP enforces this policy without regard to local health and property maintenance codes that state the square footage required for each occupant," the statement said.

"Such overly restrictive occupancy standards impact the ability of families with children to find affordable, safe housing in neighborhoods of their choice."

"Often, investigations into housing discrimination uncover subtle and difficult to detect unlawful behavior," said Nancy Haynes, executive director of the Fair Housing Coalition of West Michigan.

"Each test that we performed at an AMP property, however, ended in a clear and blatant statement from an employee that a family with children was not permitted to rent the unit that they had inquired about.

"This is not only unacceptable, it's illegal," Haynes said.

"It's been over 20 years since the federal Fair Housing Act was amended to protect families from discrimination," said Amy Nelson, executive director of the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana.

"It's disappointing and frustrating that we still find housing providers enacting written policies to prevent families with children from enjoying their right to equal housing."

"Where a family lives dictates the parents' access to employment, the children's access to good schools, and the family's access to grocery stores, healthcare, and other vital services," said Jim McCarthy, president and CEO of the Central Ohio Fair Housing Association.

"AMP Residential's refusal to rent to families with children is a deliberate denial of their right to choose the community that best serves their needs."

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