

Feds: Apartment complexes discriminated against families



RJ Wolcott, Lansing State Journal 12:42 p.m. EST November 22, 2015



(Photo: Getty Images)

DETROIT - The U.S. Department of Justice has filed a lawsuit against three mid-Michigan apartment complexes claiming they discriminated against families with children.

The lawsuit, filed in Michigan's Eastern District Court on Thursday, alleges that Parkside East Inc., Holt Manor Inc. and Kelly Manor Inc. discriminated in renting single-bedroom apartments to families with children. The properties are based in East Lansing, Holt and Owosso, respectively. The corporate entities that own them are based in Bloomfield Hills.

The suit also names Sudi Hopper, the rental agent for the three properties, as a defendant.

Hopper could not be immediately reached for comment Sunday.

The Department of Justice took legal action against the complexes following a four-month investigation by the Ypsilanti-based Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan. Testers who called each of the properties listed were told they couldn't rent single-bedroom apartments if a child was going to be living there.

Restricting a person's ability to rent housing based on family status is illegal, according to the Fair Housing Act, said Vanita Gupta, principal deputy assistant attorney general and head of the department's Civil Rights Division.

A court order to prevent future discrimination as well as monetary damages to those harmed is being sought by the plaintiffs.

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