



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 5, 2019

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Copies of the HUD complaint and conciliation agreement are available upon request.

HUD Complaint Resolved for \$130,000 + Policy Changes Against Property Management Firm

The Fair Housing Center of West Michigan along with three other private non-profit Michigan fair housing groups announce the resolution of a complaint based on familial status discrimination, in violation of the Fair Housing Act, filed against Monarch Investment & Management Group LLC.

The other fair housing groups are The Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit, The Fair Housing Center of Southeast & Mid Michigan, and the Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan.

Monarch is a property investment and management company with properties in twenty states. In Michigan, Monarch owns and/or manages 36 properties with over 9,000 units.

The complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) alleged that Monarch engaged in systemic discrimination against families with children by enforcing an overly-restrictive occupancy policy of no more than two people per bedroom regardless of a unit's square footage.

In 2017, the Michigan FHC's conducted an investigation of Monarch properties in 14 separate locations throughout Michigan. Through the use of testing, the Michigan FHC's determined about 30 different floor plans were large enough under state and local law to accommodate more occupants than the "two person per bedroom" rule enforced by Monarch agents. In fact, at one of the properties, the master bedroom was 320 square

feet, which would itself be legally large enough to house six people, yet Monarch enforced the same restrictions.

In February 2018, a HUD complaint was filed on behalf of the by FHC Counsel Jia Cobb of Relman, Dane & Colfax.

In September 2019, the parties entered into a conciliation agreement in which Monarch agreed to pay \$130,000 for the Michigan Fair Housing Centers' costs and damages, change their occupancy policy so that it is no more restrictive than the applicable local occupancy code, and train their employees and agents on fair housing laws and responsibilities, along with other terms to ensure compliance with fair housing laws. HUD did not make a determination on the merits of the allegations.

The Fair Housing Center of Metro Detroit ("FHCMD") is a private, non-profit, citizen-based organization that works to promote equal housing opportunities throughout the metropolitan Detroit area. Its mission is to ensure that those seeking housing are able to obtain the housing of their choice, without encountering unlawful housing discrimination. It engages in various activities to fulfill its mission, including by assisting with the investigation of complaints of unlawful housing discrimination (and prosecuting such complaints when necessary), educating individuals in its service area on their rights and obligations under fair housing laws, conducting research projects and housing surveys to evaluate fair housing practices, and providing training and public information programs on fair housing issues, among other activities. <https://fairhousingdetroit.org/>

The Fair Housing Center of Southeast & Mid Michigan ("FHCSEM") is a private, non-profit fair housing organization serving mid and southeastern Michigan. FHCSEM is a membership organization whose mission is to end discrimination in housing and public accommodations and to promote accessible, integrated communities. FHCSEM undertakes various activities to further its mission, including assisting in the investigation of unlawful housing discrimination, educating the public and housing advocates about fair housing rights and requirements, and providing education and outreach for housing consumers and housing advocates. FHCSEM's programs are designed to protect the rights of persons to fair housing opportunities without discrimination on the basis of familial status or other protected characteristics. <https://www.fhcmichigan.org/>

Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan ("FHCSWM") is a private, non-profit organization established to ensure equal housing opportunities for residents in southwest Michigan. Its mission is to promote integration and eliminate housing discrimination. FHCSWM works to fulfill its objectives through education, advocacy, and enforcement. FHCSWM's programs and activities include providing training to real estate professionals and housing providers; conducting testing (including audit-based tests); investigating complaints of housing discrimination; and conducting various housing-related presentations, among other activities. <http://www.fhcswm.org/>

The Fair Housing Center of West Michigan (“FHCWM”) is a private, non-profit corporation that is committed to preventing and eliminating illegal housing discrimination and to ensuring equal housing opportunities in western Michigan. FHCWM undertakes various activities to further its mission, including tracking and investigating allegations of housing discrimination; assisting individuals as they report housing discrimination; mediating and resolving claims of housing discrimination; surveying property marketing and other housing practices; training landlords, realtors, and others on fair housing practices; and building awareness and support for fair housing in the general western Michigan community. <http://www.fhcwm.org/>

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government.

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