



MIAMI VALLEY FAIR HOUSING CENTER NEWSLETTER

Published by the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center, Inc.

SUMMER 2017

JIM MCCARTHY, PRESIDENT/CEO

Join us for the 13th Annual Waikiki Party Fundraiser

The Waikiki Party Fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, August 19, 2017 at the Sinclair Community College Conference Center. The fun begins at 6:00 PM with beverages and appetizers.

Buffet dinner is served around 7:15 PM followed by a brief program to recognize our sponsors and supporters. The evening is rounded out with dancing and music provide by Award Winning Multimedia Producer and DJ Basim Blunt. And don't forget the Monte Carlo games!

Check our [website](#) later in July for registration details.



Photos by ReBecca Allgeier



SAVE the DATE

WAIKIKI PARTY & Monte Carlo

benefitting the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center

Saturday, August 19, 2017
6-10 pm
Sinclair Conference Center

\$90 /person
\$720 /table of 8

We never stop moving.
**COLDWELL
BANKER**
HERITAGE REALTORS®

Meet Your Miami Valley Fair Housing Center Board Members

Each issue we will introduce a member of the MVFHC Board of Directors

Donnie Saunders is a retired engineer who enjoyed a long career at the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. Mr. Saunders studied at North Carolina A&T State University. Mr. Saunders has served on the Fair Housing Center's Board of Directors since 2004 when he was recruited to the board by his mother-in-law, Ms. Rosa Hawes, a stalwart supporter of MVFHC who served on the Center's board for years prior. Donnie and his wife, Ro Nita Hawes-Saunders have one child Donnica La Rosa Mulzac and live in Centerville, Ohio.

Now that he is retired Donnie has more time to enjoy a variety of sports including pick-up basketball, tennis, table tennis and he occasionally enjoys shooting pool. He is an avid reader of good books and enjoys traveling. His favorite destination in the United States is Hawaii. However, Donnie also enjoys traveling abroad. He said that the best part of traveling is having the opportunity to meet people, learn what is important in their community, and experience the culture of different areas.

When explaining why he serves of the Board of the Fair Housing Center, Donnie says that he had the good fortune of being helped by a variety of people throughout his life and that he believes in paying it forward. He said that there is a need in the Miami Valley for the services that MVFHC offers, and he wants to participate any way that he might to mitigate the effects of housing discrimination.



*Donnie Saunders
MVFHC Board Member*

Fair Housing Updates

2004 Guidance on Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act

One type of disability discrimination prohibited by the Act is the refusal to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodations are necessary to afford a person with a disability the equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.

The Fair Housing Act's protection against disability discrimination covers not only tenants and home seekers with disabilities but also buyers and renters without disabilities who live or are associated with individuals with disabilities. The Act also prohibits housing providers from refusing residency to persons with disabilities, or placing conditions on their residency, because they require reasonable accommodations. Since rules, policies, practices, and services may have a different effect on persons with disabilities than on others, treating persons with disabilities exactly the same as others will sometimes deny them an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.

A requested accommodation is necessary when there is an identifiable relationship, or nexus, between the requested accommodation and the individual's disability. Some examples of Reasonable Accommodations are:

- Assigned parking space for a person with a mobility impairment
- Assigned lower mailbox for a person who uses a wheelchair
- Permitting an assistance animal in a "no pets" building for a person who is deaf, blind, has seizures, or has a mental disability

What information may a provider seek when a reasonable accommodation is requested?

A provider is entitled to obtain information that is necessary to evaluate if a requested reasonable accommodation may be necessary because of a disability. If a person's disability is obvious, or otherwise known to the provider, and if the need for the requested accommodation is also readily apparent or known, then the provider may not request any additional information. If the disability and/or the disability-related reason for the requested accommodation is not known or obvious, the requesting individual, medical professional, a peer support group, a non-medical service agency, or a reliable third party who is in a position to know about the individual's disability may also provide verification of a disability. In most cases, an individual's medical records or detailed information about the nature of a person's disability is not necessary for this inquiry.

To read HUD's Joint Statement on Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act, [click here](#).

2008 Guidance on Reasonable Modifications under the Fair Housing Act

The 2008 guidance is designed to help housing providers and homeowner associations better understand their obligations and help persons with disabilities better understand their rights regarding the "reasonable modifications" provision of the federal Fair Housing Act (FHA).

One type of discrimination prohibited by the FHA is the refusal by housing providers or homeowner associations to permit a reasonable modification – i.e., a structural alteration – of existing premises, occupied or to be occupied by a person with a disability, when the modification may be necessary to afford the person full enjoyment of the premises. Although the housing provider or homeowner association must permit the modification, the tenant (or prospective tenant) is responsible for paying the cost of the modification.

A requested modification is necessary when there is an identifiable relationship, or nexus, between the requested modification and the individual's disability. Some examples of Reasonable Modifications are:

- Widening doorways to make rooms more accessible to persons who use wheelchairs
- Installing a ramp to provide access to a public or common use area, such as a clubhouse

What information may a provider seek when a reasonable modification is requested?

The 2008 guidelines, issued in the form of questions and answers, cover such topics as:

- What is a reasonable modification?
- Who must comply with the reasonable modification requirement?

continued on Page 3...

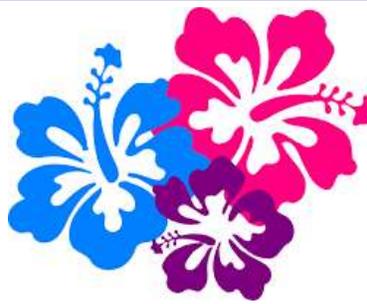
Federal Court Complaint Challenges Georgia City's Discriminatory Utility Policies

On May 18, 2017, Relman, Dane & Colfax, along with the National Immigration Law Center and the Southern Center for Human Rights, filed a lawsuit against the City of LaGrange, Georgia, on behalf of the Georgia State Conference of the NAACP, Troup County NAACP, Project South, and seven individual plaintiffs challenging LaGrange's utility service policies that have an unlawful disparate impact on African Americans and Latinos.

In LaGrange, residents receive electricity, gas, and water services from the City. Under City policy, if a resident owes any court debt, including court judgments or fines, LaGrange will not provide utility services to that resident. This policy of conditioning utilities on the payment of unrelated court debt has an unjustified disparate impact on African Americans, who are overrepresented among those owing court debt. One plaintiff in the case relies on an electricity-powered oxygen tank and CPAP machine to treat severe sleep apnea and congestive heart failure, but the City has repeatedly threatened to disconnect his utilities because he owes fines resulting from a citation for driving

without a license. The City disconnected the services of another plaintiff, who owes court debt for a plea to possession of less than an ounce of marijuana. That plaintiff was forced to leave her home along with her three children and her disabled mother until the City resumed utility service.

LaGrange also requires a Social Security Number in order to receive utility services. Immigrants who live in LaGrange who are ineligible for Social Security Numbers -- a group that includes undocumented immigrants as well as many categories of lawfully present non-citizens -- cannot receive utility services. This significantly impedes their housing choices, prevents them from owning homes, and perpetuates segregation of Latinos by forcing many Latinos to live in the limited housing where landlords are willing to hold utility accounts for tenants. This policy has an unjustified disparate impact on Latinos, who make up a large majority of foreign-born non-citizens and people who are ineligible for Social Security Numbers in LaGrange.



Photos by ReBecca Allgeier



Reasonable Modifications continued from Page 2...

- Who is responsible for expenses associated with the upkeep or maintenance of a reasonable modification?
- When and how should an individual request permission to make a modification?
- What types of documents and assurances may a housing provider require regarding the modification before granting the modification?
- What procedures are available to a person wishing to challenge a denial of a requested modification?

To read HUD's Joint Statement on Reasonable Modifications under the Fair Housing Act, [click here](#).

These articles were prepared by John Zimmerman at the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center with assistance from various web-based resources and MVFHC fair housing curricula. Visit www.myfairhousing.com

IT'S NOT EASY TO TURN OFF THE LIGHTS

IF YOU CAN'T REACH THE SWITCH

Visit hud.gov/fairhousing or call the HUD Hotline: 1-800-669-9777 (toll-free) or 1-800-927-9275 (TDD)

Fair Housing Is Your Right. Use It!

Fair Housing Center of Central Florida Phone: 321-644-6462 Fax: 321-644-6462 **NFHA**



Need Continuing Education Credits? Sign up for a Webinar!

Miami Valley Fair Housing, in partnership with the [Greater Dayton Apartment Association](#) will offer one-hour fair housing webinars featuring MVFHC vice president John Zimmerman. Each class qualifies for Continuing Education Credit (CEC) from the National Apartment Association.

The cost of each webinar is \$10, payable via PayPal once you have registered online. To register click on the appropriate webinar.

- 2017 Webinars -

- July 13 [Fair Housing and Reasonable Modifications](#)
- September 14 [Fair Housing Advertising 1—what we write](#)
- November 9 [Fair Housing Advertising 2—what we say](#)



Fair Housing laws protect immigrants, refugees, and people of all religious faiths



Housing discrimination because you are an immigrant or a refugee, because of where you come from, or because of your religious faith is illegal.



State and federal fair housing laws prohibit discrimination based on national origin, religion, and ancestry. See our [mission statement](#) for a complete list of all the people protected from discrimination and to see the services available to assist those who experience discrimination.



- July 10 to 15 [Montgomery County Fair](#)
- July 21 to 28 [Clark County Fair](#)
- July 30 to August 5 [Greene County Fair](#)
- August 11 to 17 [Miami County Fair](#)
- August 19 13th Annual Waikiki Party Fundraiser
- September 16 [Hispanic Festival](#)

MVFHC Mission Statement

The mission of the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center (MVFHC) is to eliminate housing discrimination and ensure equal housing opportunity for all people in our region, the State of Ohio, and nationally.

Specifically, the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center seeks to eliminate housing discrimination against all persons because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, familial status, or any other characteristic protected under state or local laws. In furthering this goal, MVFHC engages in activities designed to encourage fair housing practices through educational efforts; assists person who believe they have been victims of housing discrimination; identifies barriers to fair housing in order to help counteract and eliminate discriminatory housing practices; works with elected and government representatives to protect and improve fair housing laws; and takes all appropriate and necessary action to ensure that fair housing laws are properly and fairly enforced throughout our region, the State of Ohio, and nationally.

MVFHC Vision Statement

The Miami Valley Fair Housing Center recognizes the importance of “home” as a component of the American dream. We envision a country free of housing discrimination where every individual, group and community enjoys equal housing opportunity and access in a bias-free and open housing market. We envision a country where integrated neighborhoods are the norm, and private and public sectors guarantee civil rights in an open and barrier-free community committed to healing the history of discrimination in America.

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