

HUD REACHES AGREEMENT WITH MASSACHUSETTS REAL ESTATE COMPANY ACCUSED OF DISCRIMINATING AGAINST FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced today that it has approved two Conciliation Agreements with Delap Realty, LLC, of Northampton, Massachusetts, resolving allegations that the company and its agents violated the Fair Housing Act by discouraging families with children from renting over concerns the units might contain lead-based paint hazards.

The **Fair Housing Act** makes it unlawful to deny or limit housing because a family has children under the age of 18 and to make statements that discriminate against families with children. Housing may exclude children only if it meets the Fair Housing Act's exemption for housing for older persons.

"Families with children have a right to the same housing choices as other families," said Gustavo Velasquez, HUD's Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. "We are pleased that these agreements will help more families to be informed about the Fair Housing Act and their right to live in a healthy home."

The settlement agreements are the result of complaints filed with the Department by the Housing Discrimination Project, Inc., a HUD Fair Housing Initiatives Program agency, alleging that when prospective renters responded to online ads placed by Delap, its agents discouraged families with children from applying. Read the two agreements: **Agreement 1**, **Agreement 2**.

Under the agreements, Delap and the other respondents will pay \$9,500 to Housing Discrimination Project (HDP) and to develop a public service campaign on three English and Spanish language radio stations in coordination with HDP. Delap Realty also agreed to fund a three-week series of newspaper announcements in two local newspapers, including a Spanish language newspaper, highlighting the fact that refusing to rent to families with children because of the possible presence of lead paint is an act of discrimination that violates the Fair Housing Act.

In addition, Delap Realty agreed to include language in its contracts with property owners stating that the owners must comply with the Massachusetts Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Act. All future advertisements for any rental property owned or advertised by Delap and the other respondents will state:

This property complies with all fair housing laws, including the Massachusetts Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Act, which

prohibits discrimination against families with children due to the presence of lead paint and requires landlords to remove all paint hazards before renting to any family with a child under the age of six (6).

Persons who believe they have experienced discrimination may file a complaint by contacting HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 (voice) or (800) 927-9275 (TTY).

Housing discrimination complaints may also be filed at www.hud.gov/fairhousing or by downloading HUD's free housing discrimination mobile application, which can be accessed through Apple and Android devices.