

## MHI NEWS & UPDATES

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April 19, 2017

### April is 49<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Fair Housing Month

This month the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is marking the 49th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act, landmark housing legislation that became law on April 11, 1968.

HUD kicked off Fair Housing Month 2017 at its national headquarters in Washington by announcing this year's theme: "Fair Housing Equals Opportunity." During the coming year HUD will highlight the idea that equality in housing is a foundation upon which personal aspirations can be achieved and affirm the Fair Housing Act's ongoing role in confronting housing discrimination.

The opening celebration included remarks by HUD Secretary Ben Carson and Acting Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Bryan Green.

"Equal access to housing is a fundamental promise of America," said Greene. "When access to housing is unfairly limited, it, in turn, limits access to good paying jobs, quality schools and economic opportunity."

Through an array of enforcement activities, fair housing policy initiatives, and education and outreach efforts, HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity continues to take action against individuals and housing providers that discriminate. Last year, HUD and its Fair Housing Assistance Program partner agencies received more than 8,000 complaints alleging discrimination based on one or more of the Fair Housing Act's seven protected classes.

The Fair Housing Act protects seven classes of individuals from discrimination in housing. Those seven classes are: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status and disability.

State human rights laws and local city or county ordinances may add additional classes of individuals protected from discrimination. For instance, many states have included sexual orientation and/or gender identity to the list of protected classes.

All housing providers should have written anti-discrimination policies, a sample template of which are available by contacting MHI General Counsel Rick Robinson at [rrobinson@mfghome.org](mailto:rrobinson@mfghome.org).

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