

BLOOMINGTON HOUSING & REDVELOPEMENT AUTHORITY

FAIR HOUSING POLICY

It is the policy of the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (BHRA) to comply fully with all Federal and State nondiscrimination laws; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations governing Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, familial status, disability, creed, real or perceived sexual or affectional orientation, gender identity, marital status, or receipt of public assistance, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under BHRA housing programs.

To further its commitment to full compliance with applicable Fair Housing laws, the BHRA will provide Federal/State/local information to applicants for and participants in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program regarding discrimination and any recourse available to them if they believe they may be victims of discrimination. Such information will be made available with their initial and annual recertification applications. The information and resources on how to file a fair housing complaint include:

- HUD's National Fair Housing Complaint Hotline: 1-800-669-9777. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-887-8339. Website: www.hud.gov/complaints
- HUD's Chicago Regional Fair Housing Office: 1-800-765-9372. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling 1-312-353-7143. Website: www.hud.gov/complaints
- The Minnesota Department of Human Rights: 1-800-657-3704. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling 1-296-1283. Website: www.humanrights.state.mn.us
- Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis: 1-612-334-5970. TTD: 612-332-4668.
- HomeLine: 612-728-5767. Website: www.homelinemn.org

The BHRA will assist any family that believes they have suffered illegal discrimination by providing them copies of the HUD housing discrimination form and the resource information as noted above. The BHRA will also assist them in completing the form, if requested, and will provide them with the address and contact information of the nearest HUD Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

The BHRA is a stakeholder member of the Fair Housing Implementation Council (FHIC) established in July 2002 to affirmatively further fair housing through efforts to promote

fair housing rights and fair housing choice. The FHIC has three sub-committees that focus on Fair Housing issues and how to improve shortcomings:

- Public Sector
- Homeownership
- Private Rental Housing

The FHIC members include the CDBG entitlement jurisdictions in the surrounding seven county metropolitan area which are required to complete an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. The City of Bloomington is an entitlement jurisdiction.

To date the FHIC has worked on issues related to tenant screening, accessible housing, limited English proficiency, fair housing testing, fair housing enforcement, rental application fees, predatory lending, information and outreach. The FHIC will continue to pursue goals created as a result of the impediments identified in the jurisdiction's most recent Analysis of Impediments (AI), completed in 2009.

To work toward addressing the identified impediments the BHRA has responded by:

- 1) Adopting a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan.
- 2) Providing interpretation services to non-English speaking applicants and participants. Interpretation services are provided free of charge to all program participants. Additionally, the BHRA worked with the jurisdictions and the 10 other housing authorities in the jurisdictions, identified the four most common and important forms used related to Section 8 administration, and had them translated into Spanish, Hmong, Arabic, Russian and Somali. These forms include: Declaration of Status 214, Authorization to Release Information HUD – 9886, Things You Should Know, and the Housing Choice Voucher.
- 3) The BHRA supports financially the work of the HousingLink, a private nonprofit organization offering a metro-wide clearinghouse which includes a listing of private market affordable vacancies updated weekly, an online housing directory and search tool to assist in identifying vacancies, an online inventory of all assisted housing including all units with handicap accessibility features.
- 4) The BHRA has developed policies, procedures and forms to assist applicants and participants of the Section 8 program of their rights to request reasonable accommodations.
- 5) BHRA staff is trained to provide referrals to resources within the BHRA or in the city and community, to assist persons with disabilities with accessibility problems or other issues related to their disability or to gain access to supportive services.
- 6) The BHRA sponsors Fair Housing trainings to owners of rental properties within the City. Typically offered on an annual basis, these trainings are presented through the HRA's landlord collaborative, which meets multiple times per year.

The BHRA's employment and business practices provide equal opportunity in all areas of employment and programs. The BHRA will monitor activity to promote its efforts to provide fair housing for all programs by reviewing/revising policy and procedure annually and reviewing any identified impediments. This analysis includes reports and data available to the BHRA from its computer data base, staff analysis and other available means.