

Housing Discrimination Subcommittee meeting notes – January 25, 2022

Virtual meeting

Commissioners present: David Timm, Emily Camardo (Chair), Christopher Whimbush, Kristen Clegg

Staff: Reginette Osby, Rolda Nedd

Discussion focused on Education of tenants, realtors and landlords on implementation of Source Of Income (SOI) policy.

- Need to identify education opportunities for tenants, realtors and landlords
 - Reginette indicated that a Fair housing workshop for realtors and clients is being organized; and an opportunity for educating tenants could be at the screening/intake stage for voucher holders. Realtors are reluctant to work with voucher holders although the law is in place.
 - There was a question of how the law is being implemented in other jurisdictions
- Inspection and Repairs – this becomes an issue for certain small landlords with single family homes. Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections require repairs and landlords see this an excuse to refuse to rent. Suggestion that County could have a reserve fund for this purpose, could be an incentive for small landlords to commit their units to be available for voucher holders. Fredericksburg program cited as example.
- Commissioner Clegg commented on the delays experienced by apartment managers in accepting a voucher holder; inspections are not timely and present a cost to property owners/ managers, how can this be addressed? Look at the inspection process and the paperwork to determine how to improve, make efficient.

Take away:

1. Subcommittee to propose that the Tenant Landlord Commission advocate to the Board for a program to incentivize landlords to rent to voucher holders.
2. Understanding the HCV process and Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections to determine where improvements are needed. Staff from the program to attend next subcommittee meeting.
3. Staff will share chart showing the HCV process and how it impacts landlords. (prepared by AOB)