



FAIR HOUSING POLICY

I. PURPOSE/VISION

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1988, establishes federal policy for providing fair housing throughout the United States. The intent of Title VIII is to assure equal housing opportunities for all citizens. Local governments that receive community development funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 are obligated to certify that they will affirmatively further fair housing. The seven classes protected under the federal Fair Housing Act include: color, disability, familial status, national origin, race, religion, and sex. The Minnesota Human Rights Act has the same fair housing protections as Title VIII with the addition of creed, age, marital status, public assistance status, and sexual orientation.

The Scott County Community Development Agency (CDA) resolves to promote fair housing and to comply with these obligations or requirements the CDA has developed this Fair Housing policy.

II. FAIR HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Scott County CDA to ensure that fair and equal housing opportunities are available to all persons in all housing opportunities and development activities funded by the CDA regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, status of regard to public assistance, familial status, national origin, or disability. This shall be done through external policies that provide meaningful access to all constituents and fair housing informational and referral services; internal practices and procedures that do not discriminate and that affirmatively further fair housing.

EXTERNAL PRACTICES

A. Fair Housing Officer. Scott County CDA has designated the following person as the Fair Housing Officer:

Assistant to Executive Director
323 South Naumkeag Street
Shakopee, MN 55379
952-402-9022
info@scottcda.org

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The Fair Housing Officer is responsible for providing public information regarding this policy and applicable federal and state fair housing requirements and resources, and referral of all fair housing complaints. While not expected to be an “expert” in fair housing laws or to conduct any investigation or bring any enforcement actions, the Officer will be familiar with state and federal fair housing laws and the state and federal agencies that handle complaints.

A. Meaningful Access to Online Information. Scott County CDA will have information about fair housing and its Fair Housing Officer displayed on its website. The website will also have links to various fair housing resources, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Minnesota Department of Human Rights, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, and others. The website will also link to state and federal fair housing complaint forms and the State of Minnesota Olmstead Plan.

B. In-Person Information. Scott County CDA will provide fair housing information to anyone requesting such information at the CDA office building. Information provided will include:

- a list of fair housing enforcement agencies
- fair housing complaint information

Multi-language Fair Housing posters will be prominently displayed in the front lobby of the CDA office as well as smaller posters in staff cubicles where staff meet with program participants. The CDA will continue to supply additional posters to the other service organizations. The Fair Housing symbol will be displayed on all CDA brochures as well as on the CDA website.

C. Languages. Material in other languages can be requested and handled on an individual basis.

D. Promotion of Fair Housing Month. April is National Fair Housing month and is a time to promote fair housing awareness. The Scott County CDA will promote fair housing month through our agency website and social media and providing free fair housing training.

E. Landlord Education. The Scott County CDA will strive to host landlord/owner training annually for local landlords and rental property owners to discuss a variety of issues related to rental housing and the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. Fair housing and equal access to housing will be discussed in the trainings.

F. FHIC Member. Scott County CDA is a member of the Fair Housing Implementation Council (FHIC), which is a collaborative group representing the Twin Cities metropolitan area entitlement jurisdictions (recipient of federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development) and other governmental agencies. The purpose of the FHIC is to facilitate and initiate implementation of activities having metro-wide significance identified in the regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI). Examples of fair housing activities funded in the past by FHIC members include educating individuals on fair housing rights and supporting organizations to create fair housing videos.

III. INTERNAL PRACTICES

Scott County CDA commits to the following steps to promote awareness and sensitivity to fair housing issues in all of its government functions.

- A. Staff Training. The Scott County CDA will regularly train staff and elected officials on fair housing considerations, including working with people with disabilities and limited English proficiency constituents.

- B. Community Engagement. The Scott County CDA commits to ongoing community engagement. Specifically, the Scott County CDA commits to conversations with communities regarding potential affordable housing projects.

IV. HOUSING FINANCE TOOLS

The CDA is committed to assist in the financing of affordable rental housing and homeownership for low to moderate income households. The CDA will consider assisting in the development, acquisition, and rehabilitation or acquisition and preservation of multifamily rental housing facilities or homeownership with a variety of local, state, and federal funding sources. It is the policy of the CDA to ensure fair housing requirements are adhered to for all CDA-financed projects.

V. CDA RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAMS

The Scott County CDA is a developer, owner, and operator of affordable rental housing units throughout Scott County. As a landlord, the CDA ensures the Agency's rental housing programs shall be in compliance with all non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and fair housing laws and practices, as specified in the Administrative Plan.

The CDA adheres to fair housing requirements regarding rental housing issues, including Title VIII and the Human Rights Act that makes it unlawful to: (i) discriminate in the selection/acceptance of applicants in the rental of housing units; (ii) discriminate in terms, conditions or privileges of the rental of a dwelling unit; (iii) engage in any conduct relating to the provision of housing that otherwise make unavailable or denies the rental of a dwelling unit; (iv) make or publish (or have anyone else make or publish) advertisements that indicate preferences or limitations based on any of the protected classes.; (v) tell a person that because of race, etc., a dwelling unit is not available when it is; and (vi) deny access to, or membership or participation in, associations or other service organizations or facilities relating to the business of renting a dwelling or discriminate in the terms or conditions of membership or participation.

Discrimination Complaints

If an applicant, tenant, or client believe that any family member has been discriminated against by the CDA, the family should advise the CDA orally or in writing (preferred). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires the CDA to make every reasonable attempt to determine whether the applicant, tenant or client's assertions have merit and take any warranted corrective action. In all cases, the CDA may advise the family to file a fair housing complaint if the family feels they have been discriminated against under the Fair Housing Act.

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners on September 12, 2023