

FAIR HOUSING TIMES

Volume XXI October—December 2022

Welcome City of Hawthorne!

Fair Housing Foundation has just become the City of Hawthorne's fair housing service provider! Read more on Page 3.

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Understanding Source of Income Responsibilities for Rental Property Owners

Since January 1, 2020, the State of California implemented SB329 which now provides protections on the topic of "source of income" and housing providers are still catching up with what that means for rental property owners and renters alike. Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), housing discrimination is prohibited based on someone's source of income which now adds protections for individuals using federal, state, or local housing subsidies towards rent payments. This means that private landlords, property management companies, homeowner's associations, corporations, and others who rent residential property in California, cannot refuse to rent to someone, or otherwise discriminate against that individual for utilizing housing subsidy programs such as a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher.

Our offices at the Fair Housing Foundation have received an influx of complaints from current and prospective tenants who are seeing housing providers deny their protected sources of income. Examples include: Section 8 voucher recipients, participation in emergency rental assistance programs, and financial assistance through non-profits and



Understanding Source of Income Responsibilities for Rental Property Owners

By: **Sindy Guzman**

other private sources of funding. Housing providers are now required to accept all legally verifiable forms of payment as a “source of income” and are not able to deny tenants from participating in or utilizing those services.

It is important for all housing providers to understand their responsibility in completing necessary forms and signing required documents to assist tenants in accessing these forms of rental assistance. In a community effort to educate and ensure that the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords are being met under the law, the city of Long Beach hosted a workshop to dispel concerns that landlords “might somehow lose certain property rights if they accept voucher tenants” and encouraged landlords to benefit from the “guaranteed money for landlords every month.” In addition to state-wide efforts on education regarding protections of source of income, on September 1, 2022, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the Fair Market Rents (FMRs) for fiscal year 2023. HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge said: “One of the reasons that housing voucher holders are unable to use those vouchers is because the value of their vouchers has not kept up with rapid rent increases... These

new FMRs will make it easier for voucher holders facing this challenge to access affordable housing in most housing markets, while expanding the range of housing opportunities available to households.”

Through federal, state, and local efforts, together with the assistance of rental property owners, access to housing can be made attainable for city residents seeking affordable housing. For any questions on the laws regarding source of income, or if you feel like your source of income is being unlawfully denied, please contact the Fair Housing Foundation, your fair housing service provider.

Ruiz, J. (2022, August 5). *With many refusing to take housing vouchers, Long Beach aims to educate landlords • long beach post news*. News. Retrieved October 11, 2022, from <https://lbpost.com/news/landlords-housing-vouchers-workshop-refuse-homeless>

(SB329 Case Testimonial on Page 5)



In the Community



Welcome City of Hawthorne!

Fair Housing Foundation has been servicing Southern California since 1964 and we're excited to add the City of Hawthorne as our 25th city! All Hawthorne residents, tenants, landlords, realtors, and housing providers can now benefit from our services including: investigating cases of discrimination, landlord/ tenant counseling on rights and responsibilities, rental counseling for anyone looking to improve their financial health and FREE educational workshops. Thank you for entrusting us with being your fair housing service provider and we look forward to many years of service.



Meet the Outreach Coordinators!

The communities' connection to fair housing starts with the Outreach and Education Team! Meet Alicia and Christina, our go-getters in the community. You can find them at your cities' resource fairs, back-to school events, city halls and everywhere you can think of! Don't hesitate to say hi as we love building partnerships and getting to know both city staff and community members! Thinking of hosting a workshop or event? Contact us at info@fhfca.org so that our team can do what they do best, provide education and resources on fair housing to all!

Fair Housing Foundation Presents...

This Quarters Featured Organization:



Mission Statement:

Community Legal Aid SoCal fights injustice and advocates for social, economic, and racial equity by providing compassionate, holistic, and impactful legal services.

About:

Community Legal Aid SoCal is dedicated to meeting the legal needs of low-income people throughout Orange and Southeast Los Angeles Counties. With an emphasis on innovation, language access, and a holistic approach to client care, we support clients with the following services:

- Evaluation, Advice, Counsel
- Clinics, Workshops, and Self-Help Centers
- Direct Representation
- Impact Litigation
- Policy Advocacy

General Information:

Website: www.communitylegalsocal.org

Phone: 800-834-5001

Santa Ana– Main Office:

2101 North Tustin Avenue
Santa Ana, CA 92705

Norwalk:

12501 Imperial Highway, Suite 250
Norwalk, CA 90650

Anaheim:

250 East Center Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

Compton:

725 West Rosecrans Avenue
Compton, CA 90222

Our Commitment to Fair Housing

Fair Housing Foundation makes a difference in the lives and homes of Landlords, Tenants, Managers, Realtors, Rental Home Seekers and Owners. These are their real-life experiences. If you would like to share your positive experience, please email info@fhfca.org with the subject “Testimonial”.

Section 8 Voucher Upheld

Long Beach, CA- The Fair Housing Foundation (FHF) was contacted by a Caseworker who was assisting a resident who was originally housed as part of the Rapid Rehousing Program (RRP). The resident’s voucher covered the total amount of rent being charged by the housing provider for the current apartment that the resident occupied. The resident was also approved for an emergency Section 8 voucher and requested for the housing provider to accept the resident’s housing voucher to go towards the rent payment.

However, the Caseworker received an email from the housing provider stating that the voucher was refused because the “Section 8 units” at the subject property “are occupied.” As of January 1, 2020, the state of California prohibits housing owners from discriminating against tenants based on Section 8 voucher participation. California now classifies the Section 8 voucher as a “source of income” under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), which prohibits housing discrimination based on source of income and adds protections for people using federal, state or local housing subsidies including private landlords, property management companies,

homeowners’ associations, corporations, and others who rent residential property in California.

FHF was therefore able to submit two letters to the housing provider with the goal of seeking a resolution on this matter. Despite FHF’s attempts at communication, the housing provider failed or refused to respond to either of the letters. By this time, the tenant’s Section 8 voucher was at risk of expiring soon. The caseworker was able to successfully extend the resident’s voucher by contacting the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) to explain the resident’s situation. FHF then contacted Mr. Christopher C. Brancart, a Fair Housing Civil Rights Attorney for further guidance of finding a resolution. Mr. Brancart was able to review the case and send a letter to the housing provider requesting that the resident’s voucher be accepted toward the rent payment which was then agreed upon by the housing provider. The tenant had not originally intended to seek litigation, but their primary goal was to remain in their current apartment and to secure their voucher. Thanks to the tireless advocacy from attorneys like Mr. C. Brancart, we were able to see impactful results like this case which allowed for a resident to remain housed.

Our Commitment to Fair Housing (Continued)

Move Out

Accommodation Granted

Long Beach, CA- Our offices were contacted by a client who has been living in a rental unit for 15 years in Los Angeles County which was recently under new ownership a few months prior. The client had contacted our office because the owner had issued a 60-day notice to vacate due to major remodeling to be completed on the unit. The client wanted to know what tenant protections or rights were available as she was concerned about finding alternative housing within 60 days for herself and her son who has a disability.

The client was advised on what responsibilities the owner would need to adhere to when asking a tenant to vacate under normal circumstances. Due to the son having a disability and the concern about finding housing within the 60 days, the client would have the right to request a Reasonable Accommodation to request an extension on the move-out date. Additionally, the client was informed of the current Los Angeles Tenant Protections Resolution which limits the type of evictions that are allowed.

The client communicated that her goal was to resolve the situation as agreeable as possible and requested mediation from the Fair Housing Foundation. The Program Manager was then able to send a letter to the owner notifying them of the client's concerns and encouraged the owner to contact our office to discuss the matter further. The owner then contacted the FHF offices and was eager to discuss the details of the letter.

Thereafter, the owner was provided with information on the Los Angeles County Tenant Protections Resolution and local city ordinances. The owner also chose to attend a free workshop hosted by FHF and rescinded the notice until after the Resolution expires. The client was relieved to know that though she would eventually be asked to vacate the unit, she will have more time to prepare.

ESA Protection Upheld

Fair Housing Foundation (FHF) was able to successfully conciliate a case for a tenant with 4 minor children in the household. The tenant was at risk of being evicted because of defaulting in rent payments and were given a 3-Day Notice to Pay or Quit. Due to the tenants struggling with rent payments, they were put into contact with a local non-profit called Families Forward for rental assistance. However, for Families Forward to release payments to the housing provider, a W-9 tax form had to be completed. When the housing provider was asked to complete the form to release funds, the housing provider stated that due to the owner not having an ITIN and lived out of the country, that they were unable to complete the W-9 form. The tenant and their family were then once again put at risk for eviction.

The tenant was then put into contact with FHF for further assistance. FHF wrote a conciliation letter to the housing provider to inform them that California has amended the Fair housing Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) in 2019 to prohibit housing discrimination on source of income including Section 8 and other housing assistance vouchers and the housing provider would be required to complete the required paperwork. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the City of Irvine, Families Forward and the Fair Housing Foundation, we were able to ensure another successful case.



Our Commitment to Fair Housing (Continued)

What the community is saying about our workshops:

“Very clear presentation/ workshop– will forward this information to other people who may benefit from these services.”

— Property Owner/Landlord, City of Downey

“Thank you! We had a lot of questions and you answered them all!”

— Civil Servant, City of Long Beach

“Excellent presentation and information was needed and helpful.”

— Tenant, City of Costa Mesa

Learn more about your rights by attending one of our virtual workshops or walk-in clinics.

For more information reach us at:

Phone: 800-446-FAIR
www.fhfca.org
info@fhfca.org

Our Offices:

LA County: 3605 Long Beach Blvd., Suite 302. Long Beach, CA 90807

Orange County: 1855 W. Katella Ave., #355 Orange, CA 92867

www.fhfca.org

Learn more about your rights and responsibilities to Fair Housing.

Skip to page 14 for dates and locations



Fair Housing Workshops

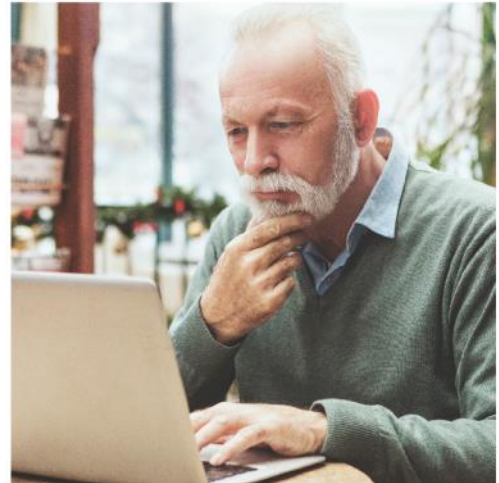
Learn from one of our Housing Counselors about your rights and responsibilities to fair housing, updated Federal/State Laws, and have an opportunity to ask any questions about fair housing. Workshops available weekly, in-person and via Zoom.

RSVP: www.fhfca.org/events

Virtual Rental Counseling Workshops

Current and future renters encouraged to register and learn about tenant rights, protecting yourself from eviction and housing loss, finding affordable housing, and much more.

RSVP: www.fhfca.org/events



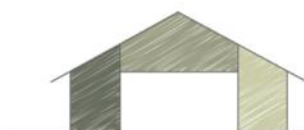
Tester Training

The Fair Housing Foundation is looking for volunteers who want to make a difference in their community and who want to help us fight housing discrimination. Modest stipend available.

Contact Sindy Guzman for more info:
800-446-3247 Ex. 1102
sguzman@fhfca.org



www.fhfca.org
1(800) 446-3247
TTY (800) 855-7100



**FAIR HOUSING
FOUNDATION**

Fair Housing Opening Doors

Renter's Corner: Pro-Tips for Renting

By: Elizabeth Castro

Looking for a rental unit can be stressful whether you are a first-time renter, or it has been some time since you last sought out a rental. Regardless of your experience in seeking out a rental, the below guide can be helpful in easing your mind by providing steps and tips on how to navigate your search smoothly.

Organize your finances and see what you can afford pertaining to rent, utilities and bills. Fair Housing Foundation's Rental Counseling Program can help you create and manage a budget. Feel free to schedule an appointment with our agency.

Check your credit report by using the only free government approved site www.annualcreditreport.com. It will not disclose a credit score but will detail your credit so you can see what a potential landlord will see when they run your credit. Choosing to pay for a service that shows your credit score is optional, but most likely will be required as part of the application process.

Consider what you are looking for in a unit and when you are looking to move. Number of bedrooms, parking, any amenities, etc.

Find an ad or ads that contain a property that suits your needs using a variety of

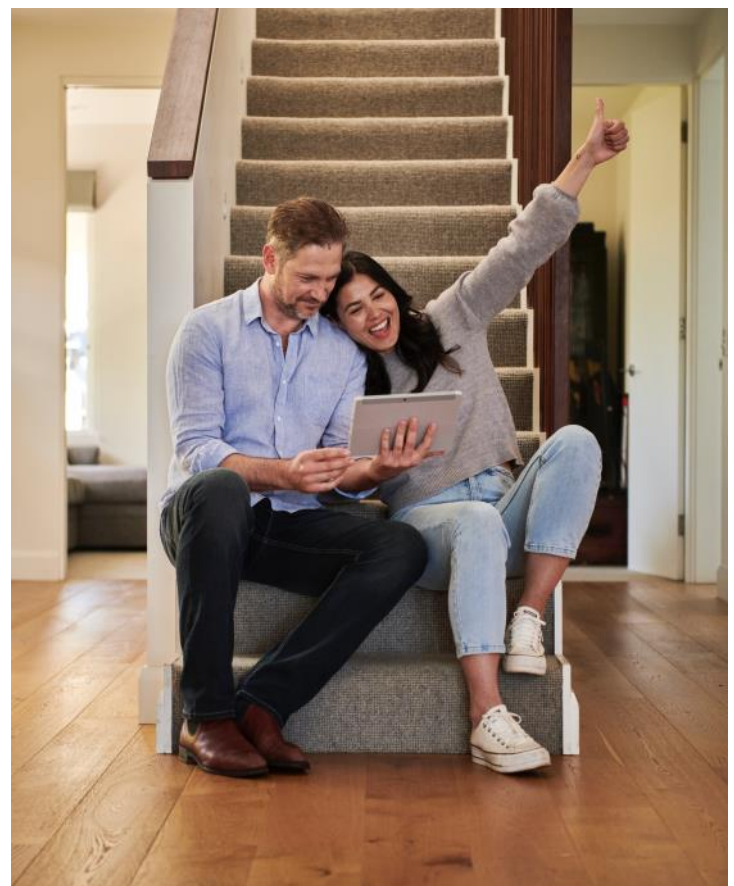
platforms. Resources include newspaper, online searches, social media, driving within an area that you are interested in.

Inspect the unit in person and double check logistics like rent amount, deposit amount, move-in date, etc.

If interested, **apply for the unit**. Only apply for units where you meet the requirements- i.e. the credit score, income, etc.

If approved, thoroughly **review the details** of your contract or lease BEFORE signing. Make sure the amount and dates are correct. If it is a lease make sure to note if the lease expires or goes month-to-month, check for grace periods (if applicable), etc.

Make sure to **conduct your pre-move in inspection**. This inspection should be complete with a checklist that both parties sign at the end. Along with pic-



Renter's Corner: Your Intro to Classic Budgeting (Continued)

tures that you take of the unit before moving in your belongings. You want to show exactly how you received the unit.

Re-read your contract or lease for any verbiage related to making major alterations, i.e. mounting a TV or cameras on the property. If it requires pre-authorization from management, make sure to get that approval in writing beforehand.

Consider renter's insurance if you do not already have a policy. This can be done with the company you use for your car, life insurance, etc. or you can choose to go with a different company all together.

Make sure to **maintain a habitable unit**. Report all issues or request repairs in writing and keep copies. Make sure not to bring in items that could potentially cause issues. For example, bring in used furniture or appliances off the streets that may contain pests or vermin and infest the unit. If that occurs, the tenant can be held financially responsible to remedy the issue.

Taking the right steps is crucial to hav-

ing a pleasant renting experience and though not every scenario turns out as planned, at least you got started on the right foot. If you find yourself having any housing related questions as the tenant or landlord, please call Fair Housing Foundation.



The contents of this document are the sole property of the Fair Housing Foundation and may not be duplicated or repurposed without the expressed written consent of the Fair Housing Foundation.

Contact our office to enroll in our FREE Rental Counseling program. Anyone who qualifies and completes the program will receive a \$50 gift card!

**1(800) 446-3247
info@fhfca.org**



Ask S.A.M.

Let our staff respond to your questions. To submit your question, please email info@fhfca.org, with the subject “Dear S.A.M.”

The Ask S.A.M section is for educational purposes only and does not constitute as legal advice. If you have a legal question, please contact your local Legal Aid or an attorney of your choice.

Dear S.A.M.,

I live in the city of Huntington Beach and Code Enforcement came to do an inspection but could only enforce electrical problems. The landlord came to the house while Code Enforcement was there and made a scene. The landlord has since been harassing me and has issued a 60-Day Notice to Vacate. Can I be evicted from the rental property?

-Fearing Eviction, Huntington Beach

Dear Fearing Eviction,

You have experienced retaliation from your landlord. You have the option to write a letter to the landlord letting her know that her decision to serve you with a 60-Day Notice to Va-

cate is considered retaliation.

The kinds of retaliatory acts covered by California law include terminating a tenancy or filing an eviction lawsuit; increasing the rent; or decreasing services. California state law presumes retaliation if the landlord acts in these types of negative ways within 180 days of the date that a tenant has exercised a legal right, such as complaining to the landlord about an unsafe rental unit. Landlords who violate this law might be liable to the complaining party for actual damages, punitive damages, and attorneys' fees. (Cal. Civ. Code § 1940.35 (2020).2)

Dear S.A.M.,

We were recently notified by email about not allowing bicycles, toys and limiting the num-

ber of chairs allowed on balconies and apply \$50 per violation. I have grandchildren who play on the balcony and have their toys there. Can landlords limit what's allowed on the balcony?

-Restricted Porch Access, Paramount

Dear Restricted Porch Access,

All rules and policies should be in writing in the Lease or Rental Agreement. You could ask the housing provider for a copy of their Policies and Rules about the specific policy that would be in violation. Landlord should send tenants a 30-Day Notice of the changes in the rules and policies and/or addendum to their rental agreement.

Dear S.A.M.,

I am a property owner in the city of Bellflower, I rent out a 6-unit apartment. One of my tenants submitted a Declaration of Financial Hardship due to COVID-19, claiming they are experiencing a difficult time and are unable to pay rent. Currently they are missing last month and this month's rent. Can I serve them a 3-day Notice to Pay or Quit and begin the eviction process?

-Landlord Seeking Clarity, Bellflower

Dear Landlord Seeking Clarity,

Due to the property being within Los Angeles County, if the tenant's household income is at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) they would have an Affirmative Defense for an Unlawful Detainer for eviction. However, the Tenant Protections Resolution does not cancel or stop the rent from being owed or stop the accumulation of the rent that is owed during the protections period. You would still be able to issue a 3-Day Notice for Nonpayment and tenants should be paying rent when they can and should be working in establishing a payment plan with their landlord during the COVID-19 Tenant Protections Resolutions.

**For questions about
mediation services,
contact our
office today:**

**1(800) 446-3247
info@fhfca.org**



This material is based on work supported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under FHIP Grant FEOI210066. Any opinion, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of HUD.



HELP YOUR
COMMUNITY TODAY!

BECOME A TESTER

We're seeking individuals who will be trained to collect data that will be key in battling housing discrimination.

WHAT WILL BE PROVIDED:



**A stipend per
completed test**



**Gas mileage
reimbursement**



**Mandatory
training**

WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO KNOW:

- Flexible schedules available
- NOT a part-time or full-time position
- Testers assigned based on availability and as needed
- Must be 18+ and a CA resident
- Subject to passing background check
- Cannot be affiliated with housing provider industry

Multi-lingual English speakers encouraged to apply!

RSVP TODAY: 800-446-3247 x1102

OR SGUZMAN@FHFCA.ORG

Fair Housing Foundation is a HUD approved counseling agency that is dedicated to eliminating discrimination in housing and promoting equal access to housing choices for everyone.



L.A. County:
3605 Long Beach Blvd. #302
Long, Beach, CA 90807
Orange County:
1855 W. Katella Ave. #355
Orange, CA 92867

CONTACT US:
email: info@fhfca.org
website: www.fhfca.org
phone: (800) 446- FAIR(3247)
TTY: (800) 855-7100

Upcoming Workshops and Events

If you would like more information on any events or if you would like to attend one the events, please call (800) 446-3247, ext. 1111 or visit www.fhfa.org/events

Date/Time	Event	Location (City)
Thursday 10/13/22 1:30 pm—3:00 pm	Renter's Fair Housing & Lending Workshop Long Beach	Mark Twain Library 1401 E. Anaheim St. Long Beach, CA 90813 RSVP: https://bit.ly/3sXyiIC
Tuesday 10/18/22 1:30 pm—3:00 pm	Fair Housing Workshop Mission Viejo	Zoom RSVP: https://bit.ly/3dNEWwg
Wednesday 10/19/22 10:00 am—11:00 am	COVID-19 Housing Protections Workshop	Zoom RSVP: https://bit.ly/3eiR21b
Wednesday 10/19/22 2:00pm—4:00 pm	Fair Housing Workshop Huntington Beach	Huntington Beach Central Library 7111 Talbert Ave. Huntington Beach, CA 92648 RSVP: https://bit.ly/3PN7Wlb
Thursday 10/20/22 1:30pm—3:00 pm	Landlord and Real Estate Fair Housing Workshop Long Beach	Burnett Neighborhood Library 560 E. Hill St. Long Beach, CA 90806 RSVP: https://bit.ly/3sXyiIC
Tuesday 10/25/22 1:30 pm—3:00 pm	Fair Housing Workshop Newport Beach	Zoom RSVP: https://bit.ly/3Cv9D3B
Wednesday, 10/26/22 1:30 pm—4:00 pm	Virtual Rental Counseling Workshop	Zoom RSVP: https://bit.ly/3fYvJSZ
Wednesday 10/26/22 2:30pm—4:30 pm	Fair Housing Workshop Irvine	Lakeview Senior Center 20 Lakeview Road Irvine, CA 92604 RSVP: https://bit.ly/3dK8MIb
Tuesday 11/01/22 1:30 pm—3:00 pm	Fair Housing Workshop Orange	Zoom RSVP: https://bit.ly/3BYXEcW
Wednesday 11/02/22 1:30 pm—3:00 pm	Fair Housing Workshop La Habra	Zoom RSVP: https://bit.ly/3C8tXWN
Thursday 11/03/22 2:00pm—4:00 pm	Fair Housing Workshop Long Beach	Bret Harte Neighborhood Library 1595 W. Willow St. Long Beach, CA 90810 RSVP: https://bit.ly/3Ca26pi