

Fair Chance Housing Update

GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE

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Briefing Objectives

- ◀ Committee Direction
- ◀ Update on CRC Activities
- ◀ Path Forward

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Committee Direction

- ◀ At the November 2020 Great Neighborhoods Committee meeting, the Committee approved the following path forward in examining Fair Chance Housing:
 - Survey Landlords and gather other data to determine current practices and scope of the problem locally
 - Develop and enhance education opportunities for landlords and people exiting prison, court system, etc.
 - Consider additional recommendations

Progress Update

- ◀ Since November 2020, staff have
 - Continued to investigate complaints as they are received
 - Monitored evolving changes at the federal level
 - Distributed When You Rent handbooks in English
 - Began updating tenant's rights materials
 - *Translating to Spanish*
 - *Adding 2016 HUD guidance material to tenant's rights materials*
 - Highlighted Fair Chance Housing during Fair Housing Month
 - *April 28, 2021, 4 hour virtual training on 2016 HUD guidance*
 - Established Outreach / Work Plan

Progress Update

◀ Since November 2020, staff have

- Expanded existing partnerships with:
 - *Reentry Housing Alliance*
 - Partnered to present virtual training
 - April 28, 2021, 4 hour virtual training on 2016 HUD guidance
 - RHA to distribute education materials to listserv
 - *CMPD*
 - Engaged with Rental Enforcement Unit to distribute education materials to listserv
 - *GCAA*
 - Partnered to present virtual training
 - April 20, 2021, Avoiding Fair Housing Pitfalls – Best Practices for Qualifying Prospective Residents
 - GCAA to distribute education materials to listserv

Progress Update

◀ Outcomes

- 60 participants (landlords & tenants) at virtual training
- Received significant pushback from landlords at training
 - *Landlords do not have a good understanding of HUD Guidelines and feel strongly that they should not be responsible for determining whether or not an applicant is “reformed”*
 - *NIMBYism*
- Fair Housing Assistance Program has received 5 total potential cases based on criminal background discrimination since April 28, 2021. This is **5 times the amount the program has received over the last 5 years.**

Path Forward

1. Continue investigating complaints as they are received
2. Continue updating education and outreach material to incorporate fair chance housing best practices and implementing locally
3. Explore expanding existing and create new partnerships (Reentry Housing Alliance, Exodus Foundation, Sherriff's Department, CMPD, GCAA, etc.) to:
 - Increase landlord education
 - Increase tenant awareness, as well as awareness of those currently incarcerated
4. Continue to identify magnitude of the problem (e.g. outcomes of increased education to individuals exiting incarceration and landlords)

Path Forward (continued)

5. Work with North Carolina's Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice to advocate for amendments to state Landlord-Tenant laws
6. Continue researching other states for best practices
7. Continue to monitor changes at the Federal level
8. Provide periodic updates to the Committee