

ANNUAL REPORT ON FAIR HOUSING EDUCATION, TESTING AND RESOLUTION CITY OF LOMPOC, CA

Report covers period from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

Legal Aid Foundation (LAF) of Santa Barbara County has provided the following services in fulfillment of the 2012-2013 contract with the City of Lompoc, California, for the purpose of educating the public in Fair Housing practices and testing the local market to verify compliance with Fair Housing laws with regard to any instances of discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender preference, marital status, and size and makeup of family.

OFFICE AND STAFF:

LAF has provided an office where legal services to the low income population are offered, currently at 604 East Ocean Street, Suite B in the city of Lompoc with a local phone number of (805) 736-6582. This office is staffed from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays, and services are provided by one full time Staff Attorney, Leroy Gee, one part time Staff Attorney, Jennifer R. Smith, and one full time Intake Coordinator, Anna Rounds.

TENANT INTERVIEWS:

Between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013, in the course of its everyday operations, Legal Aid attorneys have interviewed, either by phone or in person, 90 CDBG income-qualified clients from the City of Lompoc who have had landlord/tenant issues. The majority of tenant disputes involved non-payment of rent and habitability issues with the remainder involving evictions, retaliatory and discriminatory conduct by landlords. Often when LAF became involved in landlord/tenant disputes on the tenant's behalf, staff attorneys educated landlords on landlord tenant law as contained in the California Civil Code, Code of Civil Procedure and/or Health and Safety Code and related case law and were able to work out a reasonable resolution for their clients.

ADVERTISEMENTS CHECKED:

LAF staff performed spot checks for discriminatory language in real estate ads of the classified section of the Lompoc Record, the Santa Maria times and listings on on-line services such as Craigslist. Discriminatory language was not seen this year.

ADULT EDUCATION:

Legal Aid Staff office made housing related educational presentations in to county employees and residents of Lompoc during the past 12 months concerning the rights of single parents, minorities and persons with disabilities to equal housing opportunity. Some presentations were made in conjunction with discussing other related

services at LAF. On February 7, 2013 LAF made a presentation to Adult Protective Services supervisors. On May 9, 2013 LAF made a presentation to Child Welfare Services supervisors. On May 17, 2013 LAF presented information at the Senior Expo in Lompoc which was attended by over 300 people.

TRAINED TESTERS CONDUCTED RANDOM FAIR HOUSING TESTING OF LANDLORDS' PROPERTIES WITHIN THE CITY OF LOMPOC:

A training workshop took place on June 12, 2013 at the LAF offices in Lompoc. All testers were trained to participate in the Fair Housing Testing program and were provided information on Fair Housing Laws and their compliance and noncompliance.

Testing forms were provided to the testers to perform their tests. The testers were trained to work as pairs or teams and were trained to visit realty/apartment managers' offices separately.

Each were trained to ask about vacancies, kinds of apartments available, rental rates and which utilities/services were included, security deposits required, and what the restrictions were, if any.

CONDUCTED RANDOM FAIR HOUSING TESTING OF SEVEN LANDLORDS' PROPERTIES OR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES:

SITES TESTED IN LOMPOC FOR 2013:

LAF conducted Fair Housing testing in June 2013, at seven sites in the city of Lompoc.

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|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Arbor Square Apartments | 800 North "G" Street |
| Bay Laurel Apartments | 812 W. Laurel Avenue |
| ERA Property Management | 1000 E. Ocean Avenue |
| Fiesta Apartments | 416 W. North Avenue |
| Kailani Village Apartments | 220 W. North Avenue |
| Summerwood Apartments | 705 Summerwood Avenue |
| Tower Property Management | 307 E. Ocean Avenue |

METHODOLOGY: The following methodology was used in the testing:

Pairs of testers visited the rental property management offices separately. Each asked about vacancies, kinds of houses/condos available for sale, available apartments, rental rates, which utilities/services were included, security deposits required, and what the restrictions were, if any.

Tests were conducted to verify compliance with the Fair Housing laws in the areas of race, ethnicity, marital status, family makeup/size, sexual orientation, and source

of income with one pair of testers being a "control" i.e., the ideal applicant (a middle-class heterosexual person, single, with a steady job.)

Testers made observations as to the appearance of the office, whether a "Fair Housing" poster was on display, and the demeanor and appearance of the agent(s).

Testers had to report on which of the following information was either requested by the agent or volunteered by the testers:

1. Price range for an apartment
2. Desired occupancy date
3. Marital status
4. Number of children
5. Location desired
6. Income
7. Spouse's income (where applicable)
8. Any pets
9. Employment
10. Employment of spouse (where applicable)
11. Debts
12. Rental References
13. Credit References
14. Current address and phone number

Testers observed the following:

1. Whether the agent recorded any of the above information and, if so, how it was recorded;
2. If the agent stated at any time that the applicant might be ineligible to rent an apartment;
3. How many apartments were volunteered as serious possibilities;
4. When a particular unit would become available;
5. Whether the agent offered to put the applicant's name on a waiting list;
6. Whether an application fee was required;
7. What the agent said about a credit check;
8. Whether the agent made any remarks that could be construed as discriminatory;
9. Whether the agent spoke positively or negatively about the apartments and the neighborhood;
10. Whether the agent mentioned anything about the lease requirements;
11. Whether the agent treated the applicant courteously.

RESULTS: There were no overt signs of intentional discrimination in the protected classes tested. None of our testers encountered any epithets pertaining to the protected classes, and no steering was observed. In addition, our testers did not encounter comments about the respective neighborhoods where the units were located. Thus, no degree of discrimination, overt or unintentional, manifested in our tests.