

Commission on Human Rights

Kentucky and Hopkinsville Human Rights commission partners will give Fair Housing workshop in Hopkinsville

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The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights and the Hopkinsville Commission on Human Rights are providing a free workshop on fair housing. The session will be held on May 15 at the Pennyryle Area Development District Office, 300 Hammond Drive, Hopkinsville, Ky., 42240, from 10 a.m. to noon (CST). The two commissions warmly invite the public to attend.

The fair housing workshop will provide conversation and literature to teach people about their civil rights in the area of housing. Fair housing civil rights provide people equality and equal opportunity. In housing, this means that people may live in the housing and neighborhoods of their choice and that they can afford. It makes discrimination against people illegal in the area of housing.

The workshop agenda includes topics such as: Why Fair Housing Still Matters, Hopkinsville Housing Update, and the Basics of Immigrant Housing Rights and Responsibilities, and Overcoming Cultural Barriers in Housing.

The workshop is part of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights 2012 Fair Housing Program, a statewide campaign to promote fair housing. The theme of the campaign is, “All Doors Are Open In Kentucky.”

The goal is to educate the public about federal and Kentucky fair housing laws. The laws protect from discrimination people who are immigrants and refugees, who have different religions, who have children under the age of 18 including women who are pregnant, who have disabilities including people who use wheelchairs and people who use service animals. In general, the law protects people from housing discrimination regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and family status (people with families under age 18). Among other protections, the laws protect people from the denial of housing based on these classes, harassment, and from retaliation if they file discrimination complaints with the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.

In 1968, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the federal Fair Housing Act amended in Title VIII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act. Kentucky Gov. Edward Breathitt signed the Kentucky Fair Housing Act, which is part of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act, the same year. More than four decades later, many people in America still experience housing discrimination.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports that 10,155 housing discrimination complaints were filed across the nation in 2010. Of these complaints, 126 were filed in Kentucky in addition to hundreds of fair housing inquiries that were mediated by Kentucky City and county human rights commissions and other fair housing agencies.

Unfortunately, inequality in housing is still pervasive in Kentucky.

The Kentucky Human Rights Commission is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky Civil Rights Act including the Kentucky Fair Housing Act. Through affiliation with national government agencies like HUD and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Kentucky Human Rights Commission also enforces federal civil rights laws.

The Kentucky Civil Rights Act makes illegal discrimination in public accommodations, employment, housing, and financial transactions on the bases of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, and sex.

Discrimination is further prohibited on the basis of familial status (families with children under age 18 and pregnant women) in housing, the basis of age (40 or over) in employment, and the basis of a person's tobacco-smoking status in employment.

For more information about the workshop in Hopkinsville or for help with discrimination, contact the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights at 1.800.292.5566.