

Commission on Human Rights

KY Human Rights Commission will hold workshops to address sexual orientation and identity and housing discrimination

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As part of its 2012 “All Doors Are Open in Kentucky” Fair Housing education program to raise awareness about the right to fair housing, The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights announces three workshops to provide information for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and their families.

The “All Doors Are Open in Kentucky” program is conducted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The workshops are free and open to the public. Reservation deadline for the events is June 15. Call the commission at 1.800.292.5566, extension 26.

The workshops will provide stakeholders and all members of the public an opportunity to learn about housing discrimination and about the recent HUD rule that provides certain discrimination protections for HUD housing and financing program applicants and residents who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, and their families. The workshops will offer helpful guidance to housing communities on how to follow the rule. The workshops are scheduled as follows:

June 20, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Central Daylight Time), at Murray State University in its Alexander Hall, which is located on 16th St., between Calloway Avenue and Olive Street (There is no physical street address.), in Murray, Ky., 40271;

June 21, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time), at Centre College on the second floor of the Student Center located at 600 W. Walnut St., in Danville, Ky., 40422;

June 22, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time), at Morehead State University on the third floor of the Adron Doran University Center located at 150 University Blvd., in Morehead, Ky., 40351.

Among those speaking at the workshops is H. Alexander Robinson, who serves as executive director and CEO of the National Black Justice Coalition, and is president of the NBJC Action Fund. NBJC is an LGBT advocacy civil rights organization.

Also speaking will be Jacqueline Miller, policy and litigation fellow of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

The “All Doors Are Open in Kentucky” program will also conduct workshops and forums for people in Kentucky found to be vulnerable to housing discrimination and who do not have civil rights protections under the law. Included are immigrants and refugees protected by the class of national origin, many of whom may be unaware of the law or need information in their own languages; people with disabilities who can benefit from learning details of fair housing rights and protections concerning service animals, equal access and reasonable accommodations; and, members of minority groups who continue to face housing discrimination. Training is also being scheduled to assist people who need information about required fair housing law compliance and how to comply. Included are housing professionals such as realtors, landlords, property managers, bankers, and mortgage company employers and employees; and, advertisers, newspaper and web company employers and employees that list housing property for sale or rent. All government officials and members of the public are encouraged to attend all of the events.

In addition, the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is preparing a website link to help gather information from members of the public on alleged lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender-related housing discrimination. The commission will issue a press release and other web and email announcements when the website data tracking site is available. Watch www.kchr.ky.gov for details.

The commission aims to assist the state and the U.S. HUD determine issues surrounding housing discrimination against these groups who do not currently have identified civil rights protections in many states including in Kentucky. Nor do the U.S. Civil Rights and Fair Housing acts cover these groups. In Kentucky, some people who are LGBT have civil rights protections through their city governments, which have local city ordinances that include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes. These cities in Kentucky include Louisville, Lexington and Covington.

The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky and U.S. Civil Rights acts including their Fair Housing acts. These laws make discrimination illegal. Call the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights for help at 1.800.292.5566.