



Fair Housing Advocacy Committee Description

Background

As part of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) Report required by HUD the “*City of Portland, Gresham & Multnomah County 2011 Fair Housing Plan, An Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and the Strategies to Address Them*”, referred to throughout this description as the Fair Housing Plan, the City of Portland, on behalf of its jurisdictional partners, was tasked with collecting and analyzing data that identifies barriers to housing choice, and with developing a report that outlines strategies to mitigate the identified barriers.

In order to bring knowledgeable community voices into preparation of the report, Portland and its consortium partners convened the Analysis of Impediments Committee (AI Committee) to recommend and review research data and make recommendations on strategies to remove barriers to housing choice. The resulting Fair Housing Plan identified a number of key barriers to exercising housing choice, including a general lack of understanding by housing consumers and housing providers of Fair Housing Law, as well as the need for a clear, focused fair housing champion. In response, the AI Committee suggested creating a “Fair Housing Advocacy Committee” that meets at least quarterly to focus on the implementation of fair housing strategies and to be a strong advocate voice in Multnomah County.

Portland City Council formally adopted the Fair Housing Plan (Analysis of Impediments Report) on June 15, 2011. Council also adopted the Fair Housing Action Plan on September 14, 2011.

Mission of the Fair Housing Advocacy Committee

The purpose of the Fair Housing Advocacy Committee (FHAC), as recommended in the Fair Housing Plan, is to provide a strong advocate voice in Multnomah County for the implementation of the recommendations in the Fair Housing Plan. Further, the FHAC will hold jurisdictional partners of Multnomah County accountable for their actions under the Fair Housing Plan.

Committee Scope

The work of the FHAC will include development of a committee work plan prioritizing the recommendations made in the Fair Housing Plan, to include review of data, review and

endorsement of best practices, coordination of public information campaigns, regularly reviewing enforcement data, suggesting policies for adoption by jurisdictions, and advocating for the resources that will support effective approaches to affirmatively furthering fair housing.

The FHAC will also provide guidance and oversight as jurisdictions undertake HUD-approved audit testing of housing providers to ensure enforcement of Fair Housing Law.

FHAC recommendations and actions will be advisory to the jurisdiction members of the Consortium.

Actions will be carried out by jurisdictions through contracts, Intergovernmental Agreements or other forms of commitment.

The FHAC will report annually to the jurisdictional members of the Consortium and the Portland Housing Bureau's Portland Housing Advisory Commission (PHAC) on key findings and recommendations related to implementation of the Fair Housing Plan.

Committee Membership

Fair Housing Advocacy Committee (FHAC):

The FHAC will represent a diversity of expertise, skills and viewpoints related to Fair Housing. The FHAC will be comprised of up to 18 individuals and will include community representatives who are fair housing advocates; members of tenant rights groups, landlords and property managers, financial institutions, community based housing providers, organizations representing members of protected classes as defined under federal state or local civil rights law, and the general public.

The City of Portland (5), Multnomah County (4) and the City of Gresham (3) will each recommend members of the Fair Housing Advocacy Committee. Home Forward has one seat. Five members will be at-large and will be recommended by community based organizations. All recommendations should be made to assure inclusion of a broad spectrum of protected classes and housing industry perspectives.

Members whose terms expire or that resign will be replaced by an individual selected by the jurisdiction that appoints that seat. In the case of at-large seats, the committee will choose a new nominee to replace them to insure inclusion as described above.

Initial terms will be staggered between two and three years and will thereafter be two years.

Technical Sub-Committee:

The following partners will be asked to join a technical sub-committee: PHB, Multnomah County, City of Gresham, Home Forward, METRO, Portland Metropolitan Association of

Realtors, Bureau of Labor & Industries, Legal Aid Services of Oregon and Fair Housing Council of Oregon. The sub-committee along with staff will serve as a resource to the FHAC in planning, organizing and conducting public meetings and hearings.

Committee Staff Support:

PHB staff will provide the primary staff support to the committee. Consortium-wide staff and other partners will provide technical expertise.

Staff will develop written recommendations for carrying out the actions outlined in the Fair Housing Plan, and after feedback from the FHAC, staff will ask the FHAC to endorse those actions.

Staff will also advise the FHAC on technical issues related to resources, legal considerations, obligations, collecting data and providing a preliminary analysis of data related to housing impediments and barriers. Staff from the participating agencies will work to communicate and implement strategies that affirmatively further fair housing.

Duration and Number / Frequency of Meetings

The Fair Housing Advocacy Committee will be established in Fall 2011 and will meet at least quarterly for five years or the end of the reporting period for the Analysis of Impediments Report.

Facilitation

A chair or co-chairs will be selected to work with staff in the facilitation of committee meetings. The staff and chair(s) will develop the meeting agendas.

Decision Making Process

FHAC members will work in an inclusive and participatory manner and make decisions based on consensus.

The FHAC will periodically solicit public input on the Fair Housing Plan. As such, FHAC members are expected to listen, review and discuss various points of data and public testimony on housing barriers and impediments, and determine what priority Fair Housing Plan actions are most effective to eliminate impediments for people who are historically underrepresented or members of a protected class.

In the event that consensus may not be achieved due to time constraints or disagreement, the committee will work towards endorsement of a strategy and include a minority report to include points of minor contention. For decisions requiring a quorum, a quorum will be considered half of the members plus one.

Roles and Responsibilities of Members

- Attend all FHAC meetings and other related public activities and advise staff in advance of meeting absences or substitutes
- Review agenda and meeting information in advance of the meeting.
- Keep the organization or community you represent informed of issues and activities, and reflect the position of the organization or community in discussion and votes of the FHAC.
- Assist PHB project staff in identifying and informing other community stakeholders regarding fair housing implementation.
- Use consensus to form preferred recommendations and document the rationale for decisions.