

Lynn Housing and Neighborhood Development

Fair Housing Complaint Procedure & Conflict Resolution Policy

Each request for assistance regarding a possible fair housing issue must be taken seriously. The following policy formalizes the process wherein a complaint is logged.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a complaint procedure for consistent, efficacious and fair resolution of conflicts. Complaints may come from approved, or denied applicants for housing, housing loans, housing subsidies, reasonable housing requests or any other housing related issue where a protected person may have experienced discrimination.

NOTE: All complaints may be sent directly to the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston, The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), or HUD without passing through the **Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND) Fair Housing Committee**, if desired (contact information can be found on page 2 of this document).

Fair Housing Complaint Procedure and Conflict Resolution Policy:

1. **Written Contact:** An individual should fill out a formal, written complaint form. The signed complaint should either be emailed or delivered to the Chair of the LHAND Fair Housing Committee or should be given to the LHAND case worker who will make a copy for the complainant and will send a copy to the LHAND Fair Housing Committee. If delivered, it should go to Fair Housing Committee Chair, 10 Church St, Lynn, MA 01902. If emailed it should be sent to: fairhousing@lhand.org. The complaint form should be filled out in its entirety and should include the nature of the complaint as well as the asked for information.
2. Upon receipt of the written complaint form, the Chair of the Fair Housing Committee will forward a copy of this policy to the individual, so that they are aware of the required procedure. This procedure will be written and forwarded in Spanish and English, with other languages available for translation upon request.
3. The Chair of the Fair Housing Committee will review the complaint and will conduct an initial intake interview to determine whether the complaint is jurisdictional. If the complaint is not jurisdictional, the case will be closed and the complainant will be referred to a legal services organization.
4. If the complaint is jurisdictional then the Fair Housing Committee will conduct an in-depth interview with the complainant. All reasonable accommodations requested by the complainant such as interpretation and or disability accommodations will be provided at the interview. If no evidence collected from the interview suggests illegal discrimination, the complainant's case will be closed and the complainant may be referred to legal services.
5. If the in-depth interview yields evidence that suggests illegal discrimination then the Fair Housing Committee will conduct an in-depth investigation that may include

- tests. If the evidence obtained from the in-depth investigation suggests that no discrimination occurred then the case is closed and the complainant is informed of their right to pursue the complaint with HUD, MCAD or another agency of the courts.
6. If the in-depth investigation shows evidence of discrimination then the Fair Housing Committee will consult with the Executive Director of LHAND and either:
 - a. The Fair Housing Committee helps the complainant resolve the case through informal or informal mediation or;
 - b. The Fair Housing Committee helps complainant file a complaint with HUD, DOJ, MCAD, FHAD, or in court.

Should the above-listed efforts fail to resolve all outstanding issues, the complaint, and all pertinent supporting documentation, will be forward to the local Fair Housing Center, The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) or HUD.

If you believe you are a victim of housing discrimination you may contact the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination at: MCAD Boston Headquarters One Ashburton Place, Suite 601 Boston, MA 02108 Phone: 617-994-6000 TTY: 617-994-6196.

You may also contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at [http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/housing /file.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/housing/file.htm) or call their Housing Discrimination hotline number at 1-800-669-9777

Massachusetts Fair Housing Agencies:

[Boston Fair Housing Commission](#)

One City Hall Plaza suite 906
Boston, MA 02201
(617) 635-4408

[Cambridge Human Rights Commission](#)

51 Inman Street 2nd Floor
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 349-4396

[Housing Discrimination Project, Inc.](#)

57 Suffolk Street
Holyoke, MA 1040
(413) 539-9796