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GENERAL NEWS

DOJ Settles Racial Discrimination Suit against PHA and Owners in AL

In a [press release](#) last week, the Department of Justice ([DOJ](#)) announced that it has secured a consent decree settling a [lawsuit](#) against a PHA in Alabama. The consent decree also resolves the Department's claims against the private owners of two of the eight communities the PHA manages.

The [lawsuit](#) alleged that the that since at least 2012, the PHA violated the federal [Fair Housing Act](#) by intentionally discriminating on the basis of race or color against housing applicants by maintaining largely segregated housing and steering residents to different communities based on race. Specifically, the lawsuit alleged that the PHA denied Black applicants the opportunity to live in overwhelmingly white housing complexes and steered white applicants away from properties whose residents were predominantly Black.

Under the court-approved decree, the defendants must:

- Pay \$275,000 in damages to 23 current or former tenants who were allegedly harmed by the defendants' conduct and pay a civil penalty to the United States
- Implement policies and procedures to remedy the alleged segregation and to ensure nondiscrimination, transparency, and consistency in processing applications and offering units to applicants
- Contact a group of approximately 145 individuals who are disproportionately Black who applied the two specific communities mentioned above and who were not placed on the waiting lists, and offer them spots on the waiting lists based on their original dates of application if they still qualify
- Undergo fair housing training
- Submit periodic compliance reports to the Justice Department

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, and disability.



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