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GENERAL NEWS

HUD Makes Available Near \$30 Million to Fight Housing Discrimination

In a [press release](#) last Friday, the Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)) announced that it has allocated \$29.5 million in noncompetitive funding to 77 state and local fair housing enforcement agencies across the country under its Fair Housing Assistance Program ([FHAP](#)). The funding supports fair housing complaint investigations and education and outreach activities to inform the public, housing providers, and local governments about their rights and responsibilities under both the [Fair Housing Act](#) and state and local fair housing laws.

HUD Charges CA Landlord, Manager, and Worker with Sexual Harassment

In a [press release](#) yesterday, HUD announced that it has [charged](#) the owner, property manager, and maintenance worker of a single-family property in California with sexually harassing a female tenant and then retaliating against her when she complained about it.

HUD's charge of discrimination alleges that the property's maintenance worker harassed the tenant because of her sex, including sending her graphic sexual text messages on a daily basis and groping her in her home. After the tenant told him that the conduct was unwelcome and complained to the property manager, telling them she planned to go to the police, they allegedly refused to make critical repairs to her heating appliance, leaving her without heat and gas in her home for a month. The tenant's daughter fell ill from the lack of heat. As the tenant was vacating her home, the worker and property manager changed the lock on her door to prevent her from retrieving her belongings. They also refused to return her security deposit.

A United States administrative law judge will hear HUD's charges unless any party elects to have the case heard in federal district court. If the administrative law judge finds after a hearing that discrimination has occurred, the judge may award damages to the tenant for losses caused by the discrimination. The judge may also order injunctive relief and other equitable relief, to deter further discrimination, as well as payment of attorney fees. In addition, the judge may impose civil penalties to vindicate the public interest. If the case is heard in federal court, the judge may also award punitive damages to the complainant.

The [Fair Housing Act](#) prohibits housing providers from discriminating because of sex, including harassing tenants. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances and comments, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical behavior that is sexual in nature.



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