

Clackamas County
2017 – 2021 Assessment of Fair Housing Report

Executive Summary

**Housing Authority of Clackamas County and
Housing and Community Development Division**

I. Executive Summary

The Fair Housing Act was enacted in 1968. Recent changes to the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule 24 CFR 5.150-5.180 were finalized by HUD on July 8, 2015. The 2016 Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) in Clackamas County relied on census data provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), local information and community feedback through surveys and public meetings. The AFH was conducted jointly by the Housing Authority of Clackamas County and the Housing and Community Development Division.

HUD's newly developed AFH process has four nation-wide fair housing goals:

- 1) Reduce segregation, and build on the nation's increasing racial, geographic and economic diversity.
- 2) Eliminate racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty.
- 3) Reduce disparities in access to important community assets such as quality schools, job centers, and transit.
- 4) Narrow gaps that leave families with children, people with disabilities, and people of different races, colors, and national origins with more severe housing problems, aka., disproportionate housing needs.

The community participation process for selecting Clackamas County's fair housing goals included 10 public meetings, three separate surveys during April, May and June and consultations with 23 community agencies. A total of 310 people responded to a community survey, a public housing resident survey and a Spanish language survey. Some surveys were mailed to groups and all surveys were available on paper and online. A public notice was published in community newspapers notifying interested persons that a draft of the AFH document, AFH Goals and an executive summary was posted for a 30-day comment period that was extended to 45 days. The public notice also included an invitation to attend a public hearing on September 15th to provide testimony on the proposed AFH goals.

Community meeting discussions in April and May included a review of past fair housing goals, a review of some of the 2010 census data demographics provided by HUD, a comparison of county data to regional housing data and, a review of maps of the county areas that have high concentrations of minorities and concentrations low income households.

Contributing factors to the fair housing conditions were identified after a review of HUD data, comments during public meetings, community survey data and local housing data.

Representatives of the Legal Aid Services of Oregon, the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, the Housing Authority of Clackamas County, the Social Services Division and the Housing and Community Development Division formed a work group to results of surveys, community meetings and HUD provided data to select the contributing factors listed below:

Contributing Factors to fair housing conditions listed in priority order include:

1. Lack of affordable, accessible housing in a range of unit sizes.
2. Availability of affordable units in a range of sizes.
3. Displacement of residents due to economic pressures.
4. Community Opposition.
5. Site selection policies, practices and decisions for publicly supported housing.
6. Lack of assistance for housing accessibility modifications.
7. Private Discrimination.
8. Lack of public fair housing enforcement.
9. Lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations.
10. Land Use and Zoning Laws.
11. Inaccessible sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, or other infrastructure.

The Contributing Factors listed above are similar to the fair housing choice impediments identified in 2012 which are listed here:

1. Violations of fair housing laws in renting and purchasing property
2. Lack of knowledge of fair housing laws, including confusion about ADA and fair housing laws
3. Patterns of disadvantage for minorities and other protected classes – location, income, education
4. Lack of suitable affordable (including subsidized) housing in general, and lack of choice by quality, accessibility, location, type of units and access to opportunities
5. Land use and other public policies may be barriers to developing affordable housing

The process of analysis to select the 2017-2021 AFH Goals for the jurisdiction was a series of meetings and discussions by the work group. Workgroup members reviewed past fair housing efforts, clarified the contributing factors in the jurisdiction and in the Portland metro region and discussed the HUD provided census maps and data. After review of the available data and discussion of what data was not available, work group members agreed to the following goals in priority order:

1. Develop new housing units with long-term affordability for a broad range of low-income households with an emphasis on dispersal of affordable housing.
2. Increase accessibility to affordable housing for persons with disabilities and single parent familial status households. (households with children under 18 yrs.).
3. Improve access to housing and services for all protected classes.
4. Enforce Fair Housing laws and Increase public understanding of Fair Housing laws.
5. Coordinate Fair Housing Advocacy and Enforcement Efforts among regional partners

6. Ensure that all housing in Clackamas County is healthy and habitable.

These AFH goals will become part of planning and performance reporting documents for the Housing Authority and the Housing and Community Development Division for the 2017 through 2021 program years. These AFH goals are similar to fair housing goals selected in 2012 listed here:

- Goal I: Fair housing laws are enforced
- Goal II: People and agencies/institutions know about fair housing
- Goal III: Integrative patterns are promoted
- Goal IV: Fair housing is attained regionally
- Goal V: All rental housing is habitable
- Goal VI: Actions are guided by local and regional data

Since 2012 the significant changes that have impacted Clackamas County include a sharp increase in housing demand due to the number of new residents moving to the Portland metro area including Clackamas County. Another significant change has occurred in fair housing enforcement at the Oregon State Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI). BOLI legislative changes to the state law made Oregon state fair housing laws no longer substantially equivalent to federal fair housing laws. As a result HUD terminated its contract/partnership with BOLI as of April 3, 2016. This means that now all federal claims of fair housing violations will have to be filed directly with HUD. HUD has limited capacity to handle the additional workload. Fair Housing advocates are anticipating a backlog of complaints to be filed and investigated.

The 45-day public comment period on the draft AFH and AFH goals ended on October 10, 2016. Only two comments were submitted and both were accepted. Legal Aid Services of Oregon provided public testimony at the September 15th public hearing in favor of the AFH process and the AFH Goals. Housing Land Advocates (www.housingLandAdvocates.org) provided written testimony expressing concern on the lack of housing opportunities for Hispanic households due to land use and zoning policies in some communities that have limited multifamily housing projects.

For more information about Clackamas County's Assessment of Fair Housing Report go to the Housing and Community Development webpage at <http://www.clackamas.us/communitydevelopment/maps.html>
