



## FAIR HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT

### **1. Purpose**

As a County governmental authority undertaking housing activities, Lake County has an ethical and legal imperative to work aggressively to ensure housing programs funded and administered by the County comply with all local, state and federal fair housing laws, ordinances and executive orders that prohibit discriminatory housing practices, including: *Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Architectural Barriers Act of 1968; Civil Rights Act of 1964; Executive Order 11063, 12892, 13166; Housing and Community Development Act of 1974; Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and the Illinois Human Rights Act*. Lake County is committed to meeting this obligation and has developed this Fair Housing Policy to further that goal.

### **2. Statement**

It is the policy of Lake County to promote fair housing opportunities and encourage racial and economic integration in its programs and housing development activities. Lake County is committed to equal housing opportunity for all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, military status, familial status, order of protection status, pregnancy, or arrest<sup>1</sup> record in general and specifically in all programs and housing development activities funded or administered by Lake County. This shall be accomplished through strong external processes that provide access to all constituents to fair housing information and internal procedures that do not discriminate but affirmatively further fair housing.

### **3. Fair Housing Liaison**

Per the Lake County 2014 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, the Community Development Administrator or his or her designee will function as a Fair Housing Liaison. The appointed person(s) understands the Fair Housing Laws and will attend applicable training to remain informed. The appointed person(s) is also responsible for scheduling staff training, facilitating information gathering and monitoring fair housing issues and concerns. The Fair Housing Liaison will review quarterly fair housing reports submitted by the County's fair housing program manager(s) and monitor the status of actions recommended in the Lake County Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. It is the responsibility of the Fair Housing Liaison to carry out the following:

- a. ***Annual State of Fair Housing Report*** - The anniversary of the *Fair Housing Act* is recognized nationally each year during the month of April, at which time Lake County recommits to goals of eliminating housing discrimination and creating equal opportunity. To that end, the Lake County Community Development Administrator will deliver an annual *State of Fair Housing Report* to the Lake County Board during April of each year. The *State of Fair Housing Report* will note updated demographics and provide a consolidated description of housing discrimination complaints reported in the County. It will include complaints that are reported to Lake County fair housing agencies, the State of Illinois, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Fair housing issues identified in the community, such as in the newspaper, will also be recorded in the report.

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<sup>1</sup> A protected class in Illinois starting January 1, 2020

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- b. ***Fair Housing Funding*** - Lake County will continue to provide Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to fair housing groups to support the education, counseling and legal services they provide to local residents. Topics related to fair housing such as transportation and affordable housing will also be supported by CDBG funding.
- c. ***Fair Housing Community Outreach*** - Lake County seeks to participate in community-wide fair housing and outreach activities. To the greatest extent feasible, the Fair Housing Liaison will encourage Lake County's participation in community events to engage the broadest audience possible and gain community feedback regarding fair housing concerns.
- d. ***Affirmative Marketing Program*** - Lake County or any sub-recipient of Lake County housing grant funds will carry out an affirmative marketing program to attract prospective buyers or tenants of all majority or minority groups. All advertising for the sale or rental of housing in all programs and housing development activities funded or administered by the Lake County will indicate to the public that such housing is open to all persons and is designed to attract buyers and renters without regard to race, color, gender, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, military status, familial status, victims of sexual harassment, or being an individual with orders of protection. All brochures, circulars, billboards, direct-mail and other forms of advertising for the sale or rental of housing will include the official equal housing opportunity slogan or logotype. Lake County will include the Fair Housing Logo on all housing related documents and advertisements, and the HUD fair housing poster, which includes the *Code of Equal Opportunity in Housing*, is displayed in a prominent place in government offices. Lake County will also secure and distribute Fair Housing material provided by Fair Housing agencies and organizations.
- e. ***Private Sector Role in Fair Housing*** – To increase the supply of housing that is affordable to all racial and ethnic groups in Lake County, the Fair Housing Liaison (or designee) will develop partnerships with the private sector to expand the supply of affordable housing. This work includes working with developers to identify and to remediate the barriers to creating lower-cost-for-sale and rental housing.
- f. ***Technical Assistance*** – The Fair Housing Liaison will provide guidelines for zoning and building codes at county and municipal levels to increase equitable access to housing.

## **4. Reporting Possible Discrimination**

Lake County is committed to providing safe, affordable, decent, and sanitary housing located in areas where people choose to live and to assuring equal housing opportunity and non-discrimination in all activities. Complaints pertaining to discrimination in any program funded or administered by Lake County or its sub-recipients may be filed with a local fair housing agency, the State of Illinois, or HUD.

- To file a complaint with a local fair housing agency, contact Prairie State Legal Services

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(PSLS) Fair Housing Program at 855-FHP-PSLS (855-347-7757), place a toll-free call at (800) 942-3940 or apply for legal assistance on <https://www.pslegal.org/psls-apply-online.asp>. *PSLS can also help the public submit complaints, as appropriate, to the two entities below:*

- To submit a housing discrimination complaint with the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR), call the IDHR Fair Housing Intake Investigator at (312) 814-6229 or email [IDHR.FairHousing@illinois.gov](mailto:IDHR.FairHousing@illinois.gov).
- To file a complaint with HUD, place a toll-free call to (800) 669-9777 or TTY (800) 927-9275; complete the online complaint form available on <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD> ; or mail a completed complaint form or letter to: Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Department of Housing & Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Room 5204, Washington D.C. 20410-2000.

This information shall be publicly available at [www.lakecountyil.gov](http://www.lakecountyil.gov). Alleged acts of fair housing discrimination by County employees or contractors are to be immediately brought to the attention of the Fair Housing Liaison. It is the policy of Lake County to cooperate in the investigation of fair housing complaints.

## 5. Internal Practices

- Planning** – As stated in its November 9, 2004 Regional Framework Plan, Lake County shall “encourage a diverse variety of housing units to meet the needs of Lake County residents of different demographic groups and economic levels in a manner consistent with local planning objectives.” For purposes of this Policy Statement, this shall include meeting the housing needs of people with disabilities.
- Training & Awareness** - Lake County will introduce fair housing training to relevant personnel, such as housing inspectors and planners in the Planning, Building & Development Department. Linkages between work under this Policy and broader diversity awareness and training initiatives in Lake County will be explored.

DATED, at WAUKEGAN, LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of December, A.D. 2020.