



HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY IN HOUSING

Housing Rights News

Spring 2022
FY 22-23, Issue 1



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HOUSING RIGHTS HOTLINE: 1-800-477-5977

TTY: 1-213-201-0867

www.housingrightscenter.org



JOIN OUR ANNUAL HOUSING SUMMIT!

Chancela Al-Mansour, Executive Director



In a year of rising discrimination, inequality, and crisis, it is especially important that the civil rights community remain connected in the struggle for fair housing and equal opportunity. This spring, the Housing Rights Center (HRC) will convene its annual Housing Rights Summit, where advocates and community members will together unpack barriers to housing opportunity and uplift pathways to equity.

HRC is proud to announce that this year's summit, titled "Righting Wrongs, Creating Hope," will take place on April 21, 2022 in a virtual format. Key topics will include the movement for reparations and indigenous calls for #LandBack; the preservation of Black homeownership; COVID-19 eviction protections at the local, state, and federal levels; litigating to defend Section 8 tenants; and more.

A free online resource gallery will also be available where community members can connect with public interest groups and service organizations to obtain crucial services and referrals.

Learn more, register, or contribute at www.housingrightscenter.org/summit. We hope to see you there. ◀



Looking for affordable housing?

PROJECT PLACE

RENTAL LISTINGS - MARCH 2021

PUBLISHED BY THE HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

www.housingrightscenter.org/rental-listing

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COVID-19 RENT RELIEF AND EVICTION UPDATES

Elana Eden, Director of Media, Outreach & Education

The California COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program (Housing is Key) will no longer accept new applications as of April 1, 2022. If your application is submitted before April 1, all rent requested through March 31 will be funded. The program will not provide assistance for rent due April 1, 2022 or after.

Tenants with pending applications have a defense in court against eviction for unpaid rent.

Additional eviction protections apply in all Los Angeles County cities and unincorporated communities. Starting April 1, 2022, tenants will be able to delay rental payments for one year by notifying their landlord, in writing, within 7 days after rent is due. A sample notice is available at www.housingrightscenter.org.

Note: Tenants who earn 80% of the area median income or less will be able to delay rental payments from April 1 until December 31, 2022. Tenants who earn more than 80% of the area median income can only delay rent that is due between April 1 and May 31, 2022.

The Los Angeles County COVID-19 Tenant Protections also give tenants a defense against evictions for reasons that are not their fault, including most owner move-ins; having unauthorized occupants or pets; and nuisance (such as noise).

In most cities, these protections last until December 31, 2022. However, the same protections apply in the City of Los Angeles for 12 months after the local emergency is lifted.

For more updates, tune into HRC's weekly COVID-19 update webinars. RSVP at www.housingrightscenter.org/register. ◀



Fair Housing Certification Training

Register: www.housingrightscenter.org

The graphic features a dark blue background with a white icon of a house and a scale of justice. The text is in white and yellow.



Landlords, managers, and property owners can receive certification in Fair Housing Laws, best business practices, compliance, and more.

The graphic features a light yellow background with a dark blue icon of a document and a house. The text is in dark blue and black.



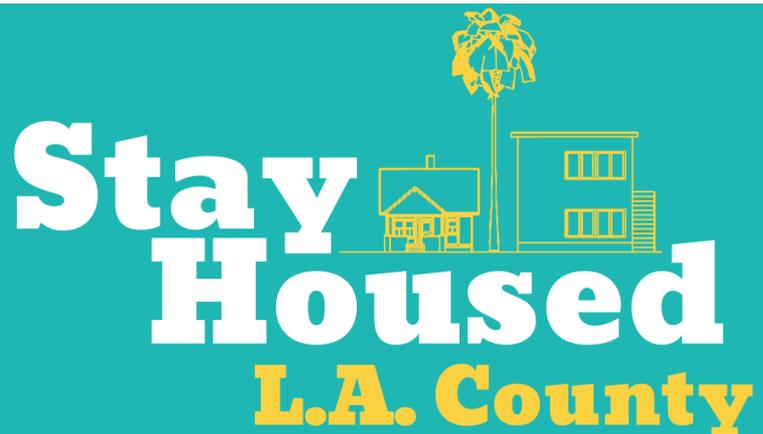
WEEKLY HOUSING RIGHTS LIVE Q&A

EVERY MONDAY | 1-2 PM
ON FACEBOOK
FOLLOW US
@HOUSINGRIGHTSCENTER

The graphic features a purple background with a white icon of three people in a circle. The text is in white and yellow.

**Facing eviction during
COVID-19?**

**Get free or low-cost help at
www.stayhousedla.org**



**Stay Housed
L.A. County**

The graphic features a teal background with a white icon of a house and a palm tree. The text is in white and yellow.

HRC FILES TO PROTECT SECTION 8 VOUCHER HOLDERS IN LOS ANGELES

Elana Eden, Director of Media, Outreach & Education

The Housing Rights Center has filed a lawsuit on behalf of an elderly tenant in Los Angeles who suffered illegal discrimination because she receives a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher. HRC joins Ms. Rhina Tejada in bringing this action against Vision Property Investment LLC and its CEO, Lea Rosenfield, for **source of income discrimination** in violation of city and state law.

Ms. Tejada, a 78-year-old senior on a fixed income, has lived in her Los Angeles apartment for 22 years. In fall 2019, after waiting for many years, she finally received a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher to subsidize her rent. This voucher is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by the City of Los Angeles, which pays all or a portion of the rent directly to the landlord.

But, the lawsuit alleges, Ms. Rosenfield—whose company owns and manages multiple other properties throughout Los Angeles—staunchly refused to accept the monetary assistance for

her long-term tenant and began a year-long campaign to blatantly undermine Ms. Tejada’s fair housing rights. HRC’s investigation later uncovered Ms. Rosenfield and Vision Property Investment’s multiple illegal actions to avoid accepting Ms. Tejada’s lawful rental payments and to deny other Section 8 voucher holders their rights to equal housing.

that **HRC is actively protecting the rights of Section 8 voucher holders** like Ms. Tejada,” said Zachary Frederick, HRC Staff Attorney.

Section 8 rent subsidy programs are included in existing laws making it illegal to discriminate against a tenant or a potential tenant based on the source of their income in both the City and County of Los Angeles, as well as throughout the State of California. Still, HRC receives numerous complaints each year about landlords and management companies refusing to accept these important vouchers. In 2020, HRC launched a campaign to identify, educate, and hold accountable landlords and property management companies in Los Angeles County that routinely discriminate against Section 8 voucher holders.

If you believe you have experienced discrimination based on source of income or any other protected class under federal or California law, please reach out to HRC. ◀

NO SECTION 8?
NO MORE.

California tenants are protected from discrimination for paying rent with public assistance, including Section 8 vouchers.

REPORT DISCRIMINATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Housing Rights Hotline: 1-800-477-5977
www.housingrightscenter.org/help

HRC HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

“With this case, we are raising awareness about source of income protections in California—and placing landlords and property management companies on notice

This material is based on work supported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under FHIP Grant FPEI20062. Any opinion, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of HUD

Need help?
Housing Rights Hotline

Toll Free: 1-800-477-5977
TTY: 1-213-201-0867

Email: info@housingrightscenter.org
Appointments: www.housingrightscenter.org/help

SECTION 8 & SOURCE OF INCOME PROTECTIONS

"Source of income" (SOI) laws protect the rights of tenants to use income from public assistance, including Section 8, to pay rent.

Under California Civil Code §12920, housing providers may not reject rental applicants because they would pay rent using public assistance or other "non-traditional" sources of income.

Property owners have the right to screen applicants for past conduct and ability to pay rent, as long as the screening is applied equally to all applicants.

Landlords must include income from public assistance in determining whether an applicant meets income requirements. They may not charge a higher rent to tenants who receive assistance, or raise the rent in order to make their property ineligible for a voucher program.

If you have experienced housing discrimination because you receive Section 8 or other public assistance, contact the Housing Rights Center today.



HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER
WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY IN HOUSING

EXAMPLES OF LAWFUL INCOME

- Section 8 and other housing subsidies
- Social Security
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Disability Income (SSDI)
- CalWORKS
- Child/Spousal Support
- Unemployment Benefits
- "Under the Table" Employment
- Regular Paychecks

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION

- An ad for housing says "No Section 8"
- A housing application says all tenants must have a full-time job
- Your current landlord says you will have to move out once you enroll in a voucher program
- You are charged a higher security deposit because part of your income is from Social Security



HRC RECEIVES HUD FUNDING TO COMBAT RACE AND GENDER-IDENTITY DISCRIMINATION

Susan Lin, Senior Outreach Coordinator

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded the Housing Rights Center \$125,000 to combat **rising housing discrimination against Asian communities and transgender individuals**. HRC is one of several agencies selected to receive the Education and Outreach Initiative (EOI) grant under HUD’s Fair Housing Initiative Program (FHIP).

“Between the pandemic, the change in federal administration, and **the growth of violence against Asian, transgender, and unhoused individuals**, the past year has brought unprecedented challenges and changes to fair housing advocacy—especially in California,” said Susan Lin, Project Manager. “This grant will allow HRC to expand its outreach to Southern California’s most vulnerable communities with new and enriched resources in Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Korean.”

California was the site of nearly half of all COVID-related anti-Asian

hate incidents in 2020, highlighting the need for comprehensive outreach to the diverse and multilingual Asian communities. California is also home to 50% of the nation’s unhoused transgender individuals, making it crucial for homeless service providers to learn about the newly reaffirmed Equal Access Rule requiring **inclusive policies for transgender and gender-non-conforming individuals**.

HRC received its first EOI grant in 2020 to address sexual assault and harassment in housing. HRC provided nearly 30 fair housing workshops to community-based organizations working to support survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, and distributed thousands of multilingual fair housing resources throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

Tenants who feel they are being discriminated against based on race, gender-identity, or sexual orientation can reach out to HRC through our hotline or on www.housingrightscenter.org. ◀

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS



LOCAL HOUSING RIGHTS WORKSHOPS

Your City

Contact us at outreach@housingrightscenter.org to schedule a Housing Rights Workshop for your community or your organization.

WEEKLY COVID-19 UPDATES

Online

Tune into a weekly COVID-19 Update webinar. Thursdays in Spanish, Fridays in English. Sign Up: www.housingrightscenter.org/register

FRIDAYS - 2:00-5:00 PM

*Walk-In Clinic
Alhambra Civic Center Library*

Speak to a housing counselor every Friday except the fifth Friday of the month at the Alhambra Civic Center Library.

This material is based on work supported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under FHIP Grant FPEI20062. Any opinion, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of HUD

HELP END DISCRIMINATION BECOME A CIVIL RIGHTS TESTER

- The Housing Rights Center is seeking **volunteer civil rights testers** to assist with the investigation of housing discrimination complaints throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.
- Testers play the role of a person seeking housing by phone or email. They must be objective observers, accurate reporters, and truthful witnesses, as they will be responsible for reporting fully on their experience.
- Testing is a volunteer position. There are no guaranteed minimum hours or assignments. However, testers receive a stipend for each test and can work flexible hours.
- Testers must have reliable internet and phone access to conduct testing via email and telephone.
- Prospective testers must attend a 2-hour unpaid training session and pass a criminal background screening.
- We are in need of testers of all adult ages and ethnic backgrounds. Bilingual applicants are also strongly encouraged to apply.
- **For more information, contact Monica Maldonado at mmaldonado@housingrightscenter.org or (800) 477-5977 ext. 1127.**



Do you need help with rent or utilities?

You may be eligible for the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program.

Financial assistance is available from the State of California for income eligible renters and their landlords who have been impacted by COVID-19 and have past due rent or utilities, or who need help with upcoming rent or utilities.

Both renters and landlords are encouraged to apply.

Assistance is available for unpaid rent dating back to April 1, 2020, as well as for future rent.

Assistance is also available for unpaid utility payments dating back to April 1, 2020, or for future utility payments, which will both be compensated at 100% of cost, limited to a total of 12 months, and paid directly to the utility provider.

Assistance from the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program does not count as earned income and will not affect eligibility for any other state benefit assistance programs.

All applicant information is kept private and will not be shared.

Income eligible applicants may qualify regardless of immigration status and will not be required to show proof of citizenship.



How do I apply?

To check eligibility and apply, visit HousingIsKey.com or call **833-430-2122**.

For in-language assistance, to get help with eligibility requirements or filling out an application, schedule an appointment with a local organization near you by calling **833-687-0967**.

The CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program is an official State of California sponsored program.