



HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY IN HOUSING

Fall 2021

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Housing Rights **NEWS**



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HOUSING RIGHTS HOTLINE: 1-800-477-5977

TTY: 1-213-201-0867

www.housingrightscenter.org



HOUSING RIGHTS NEWS

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-  @hrc_la
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Renters and landlords in the City of Los Angeles are now eligible for the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program!

 **CA COVID-19 RENT RELIEF**

**Apply Now: HousingIsKey.com
or call 833-430-2122**

FAIR HOUSING CERTIFICATION TRAINING

FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS

UPCOMING
2021 DATES:

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2021
OCTOBER 29, 2021
NOVEMBER 26, 2021**

SUMMING UP AND LOOKING AHEAD

Susan Lin, Senior Outreach Coordinator

With many COVID-19 emergency laws set to end September 30, 2021, California tenants and landlords are looking for answers and assistance. The Housing Rights Center (HRC) is working hard to meet these urgent needs, and keep people housed, by providing counseling and education on residents' rights and resources under California and local law. **See pages 5 and 6 for crucial information on rent relief and eviction laws during this time, and sign up for a free online workshop at www.housingrightscenter.org/workshops.**

By September 30, 2021, tenants in most California cities* must pay 25% of any rental debt they have accrued from September 2020 through September 2021. Together with an official hardship declaration (available at www.housingrightscenter.org) and an application for California's emergency rent relief (available at <http://housingiskey.org>), these payments protect tenants from eviction for rent they have not paid during the pandemic. However, as of October 1, 2021, most tenants* must begin paying full monthly rent and will no longer have the option to defer their rental payments, even if they are still financially recovering from the impacts of COVID-19.

While rent and evictions have been top of mind for many families this past year, the pandemic has also exacerbated many other equally critical housing issues. This fall, HRC is proud to announce a new outreach and education program targeting two of those difficult problems: LGBTQ+ homelessness, and anti-Asian discrimination. The new program is funded by an award from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), and comes as HRC wraps up its previous award focused on sexual harassment and violence in housing—another serious problem that has only grown during the pandemic. See **pages 2 and 3** for recent community events on sexual harassment, and **page 7** for a preview of some of the topics HRC will provide special outreach on over the next 12 months.

HRC also recently concluded a year-long investigation program into Section 8 discrimination in Los Angeles County, funded by the California Department of Fair Employment & Housing (DFEH). For more information on protections for tenants who receive Section 8 and other housing subsidies, see **page 2**.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not over, and nor are the extreme challenges facing our communities in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. HRC is here to empower tenants and landlords to assert their rights, access resources, and stay housed during this time. For free information on your rights, call 1-800-477-5977 (TTY: 1-213-201-0867) or visit www.housingrightscenter.org. ◀

**Tenants in the City of Los Angeles are encouraged, but not required, to make these payments. City of L.A. tenants can also continue to defer their rent for the duration of the local emergency proclaimed by Mayor Eric Garcetti.*

HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

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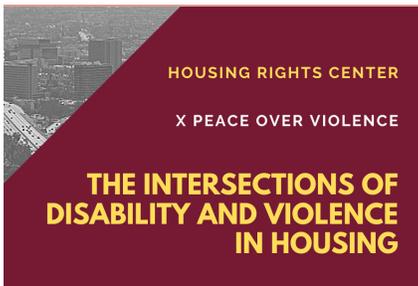
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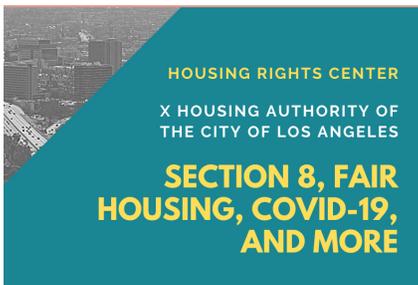
WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS: SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISABILITY, AND SOURCE OF INCOME

HRC works to inform our communities about the fair housing laws that protect all of us. Want to schedule a workshop? Send an email to our team at outreach@housingrightscenter.org.



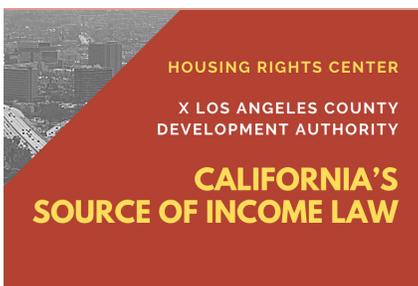
DISABILITY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN HOUSING

HRC and Peace Over Violence (POV) reunited for a second free online webinar addressing the disproportionate impact of illegal sexual harassment on tenants with disabilities. The webinar, titled “The Intersections of Disability and Violence in Housing,” empowered residents, service providers, and housing providers alike to recognize and combat sexual violence in housing. Previously, HRC held another joint webinar with POV that provided an overview of the history of advocacy for survivors of sexual violence. This event built on the last by offering a closer look at the rights of deaf and disabled survivors and older adults. To hear about future webinars on fair housing topics, join HRC’s email list at www.housingrightscenter.org/workshops.



CITY OF LOS ANGELES: SECTION 8, FAIR HOUSING, COVID-19, AND MORE

In California, tenants are protected from discrimination based on their source of income—such as the Housing Choice Voucher, also known as Section 8. Learning these rights has become even more critical during the pandemic housing crisis. Recently, HRC partnered with the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) to conduct two workshops in English and Spanish answering essential questions about the Section 8 program, fair housing laws, CA COVID-19 rent relief resources, and COVID-19 tenant protections. During the extended Q&A, one participant was pleasantly surprised to learn that she was eligible to apply for assistance!



L.A. COUNTY LANDLORDS LEARN CALIFORNIA'S SOURCE OF INCOME LAWS

In August, the Housing Rights Center partnered with the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) for a Lunch & Learn event titled “California’s Source of Income Laws: What Owners and Participants Need to Know.” This seminar assisted private landlords, including those who participate in LACDA housing programs, in understanding how to handle everyday situations arising when tenants pay rent using public subsidies. For example, what should a landlord do if a current tenant begins to receive Section 8? The virtual event was part of a series of Lunch & Learn workshops provided by LACDA to both tenants and property owners. For the opportunity to learn and receive updates on Housing Choice Vouchers and other housing programs in Los Angeles County, visit www.lacda.org.

PROJECT PLACE

RENTAL LISTINGS - SEPTEMBER 2021

PUBLISHED BY THE HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

www.housingrightscenter.org/rental-listing

HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER LAUNCHES WEBPAGE TO ADDRESS SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN HOUSING

Susan Lin, Senior Outreach Coordinator

The Housing Rights Center is proud to announce a new page on its website dedicated to Sexual Harassment in Housing, which provides vital information about discrimination based on sex under the federal Fair Housing Act. The webpage will serve as a dedicated digital space for survivors and agencies seeking assistance and information on sexual harassment in housing.

In October 2020, the Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded HRC a one-year grant of \$125,000 to support its education and outreach efforts on sexual harassment in housing. This webpage builds on the past year's campaign to provide fair housing and outreach on sexual harassment and assault and other critical issues facing tenants and landlords during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, HRC and other National Fair Housing Alliance member organizations collectively reported a 13% increase in sexual harassment complaints. In a study of 100 low-income women living in public housing or participating in the Section 8 voucher program, 16% had experienced sexual harassment or other problematic sexual behavior from a landlord. Many tenants who are unaware of the protections afforded to them under the Fair Housing Act

find themselves forced out of their homes or subjected to constant sexual harassment by their housing providers.

“For most tenants dealing with the economic repercussions of the pandemic has been overwhelming enough. When some families are barely making enough to afford rent, utilities, childcare, medical bills, and more, the last thing they want to deal with is being made to feel unsafe in their homes due to sexual harassment from their housing provider,” said EOI Project Manager Susan Lin. “We hope to offer tenants tools to assert their rights by providing a basic understanding of the protections and resources at their disposal.”

The page outlines the two types of sexual harassment recognized under fair housing law: (1) quid pro quo sexual harassment and (2) hostile environment. It also addresses issues such as landlord liability for fair housing violations, harassment that occurs between tenants, recognizing that harassment is gender non-specific, and how to report or get help with sexual harassment in housing.

HRC provides free workshops on these topics and additional fair housing issues to community organizations. To view this resource and request a training, visit www.housingrightscenter.org/sexual-harassment. ◀

FALL 2021 UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

FAIR HOUSING: WHO IS PROTECTED & WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Oct. 29, 2021, 1:30 - 2:30 PM
LA Law Library

Learn about how the law prohibits the denial of housing to people because of their membership in one or more protected classes.

LEARN YOUR CITY'S LOCAL COVID-19 PROTECTIONS

Your City!

Need information on housing issues for yourself or your community? Sign up for a free workshop focused on a specific Southern California city at www.housingrightscenter.org/workshops.

WALK-IN CLINIC

Fridays, 2:00 - 5:00 PM
Alhambra Civic Center Library

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

What type of proof do I need to break my lease early if I am a victim of domestic violence?



A restraining order, OR police report showing that you were the victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, stalking, or elder/dependent adult abuse.

Civil Code 1946.7



COVID-19 RENT PROTECTIONS END SEPTEMBER 30, 2021. HERE'S WHAT TO DO NOW.

If you have ever missed rent because of the pandemic:

- ① **Give your landlord the official rent protection form.**
You can download the "Declaration of COVID-19 Related Financial Distress" at www.housingrightscenter.org.
- ② **By September 30, 2021, pay 25% of any rental debt owed since September 1, 2020.**
The due date for the rest of your rent debt varies by city. Contact HRC to learn more.
- ③ **Pay your October rent in full.**
You can be evicted if you don't.
- ④ **Apply for rental assistance at www.HousingIsKey.com.**
Eligible households can get up to 100% of their rental debt paid.

If you get a notice for unpaid rent:

- ① **Don't move out.**
These protections are meant to help you stay. They don't work if you leave before your case is over.
- ② **Respond to the notice in time.**
Give your landlord the "Declaration" form within 15 days.
- ③ **Get legal aid at www.StayHousedLA.org.**
A lawyer can make all the difference. Find one for free or low cost anywhere in LA County.
- ④ **Appear in court on your court date.**
You can use your protections if you show up. If you don't show up, you can be evicted.



**CA COVID-19
RENT RELIEF**



**Have you been impacted by
COVID-19? It's NOT your fault.**

Get 100% of your rent and utilities paid.

If COVID-19 has impacted your ability to pay or receive rent and utility payments, the State of California is here to help you. Income-eligible renters and their landlords may receive 100% financial assistance through the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program.

Both renters and landlords are encouraged to apply.

Get help with 100% of your unpaid rent and utilities dating back to April 1, 2020, as well as future rent payments. Utility assistance will be paid directly to the utility provider.

Assistance from the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program does not count as earned income for renters and will not affect eligibility for other state benefit assistance programs. You won't be asked about citizenship and your information will be kept private.



How do I apply?

To check eligibility and apply, visit [HousingIsKey.com](https://www.housingiskey.com) or call **833-430-2122**.

For assistance in another language, or 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.

LGBTQ+

& FAIR HOUSING

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Gender Identity/Expression Discrimination

Fair housing laws also protect individuals who are transgender or who do not conform to gender stereotypes from being denied housing, harassed or given unequal terms or treatment based on their gender identity and expression



Sexual Orientation Discrimination

The California Fair Employment & Housing Act (FEHA) makes it illegal for landlords to discriminate against individuals who are gay, lesbian or bisexual. The law also protects those who are perceived to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual no matter what their sexual orientation.

Discrimination is illegal and reporting it is the first step to stopping it in your community! The Housing Rights Center has partnered with your city to investigate reports of housing discrimination, and provide victims of discrimination and landlords with information about their rights, responsibilities, and legal options.

CONTACT:
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(800) 477-5977
www.housingrightscenter.org

Homeless Shelters & Transitional Housing

It is illegal to refuse to admit someone to a homeless shelter or program based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It is illegal to deny an individual housing that is consistent with their gender identity.

Retaliation

It is illegal for a landlord or manager to retaliate against a tenant because that tenant exercised their housing rights. Retaliation can include evicting a tenant for reporting discriminatory behavior, increasing the rent, or creating a hostile living environment.

Hate Crimes

Landlords or managers could be held legally liable if he or she fails to intervene when a tenant is being harassed, threatened or assaulted by other tenants within the same building based on their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.



Forms of Discrimination

- ✘ Making derogatory comments
- ✘ Refusing to rent to same sex couples
- ✘ Refusing to use an individual's preferred name and/or gender pronoun
- ✘ Having a bias or making assumptions based on one's perceived AIDS/HIV Status



MAIN OFFICE

3255 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1150
Los Angeles, CA 90010

PASADENA OFFICE

1020 N. Fair Oaks Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91103

VAN NUYS OFFICE

6320 Van Nuys Blvd., Ste. 311
Van Nuys, CA 91401