

Delaware County Apartment Complex Pays \$15,000 to Settle Housing Discrimination Complaints

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Fort Washington, PA – The Fair Housing Council of Suburban Philadelphia (FHCS), a single mother, and her minor child settled federal housing discrimination complaints filed against the owners and agent of Garden Court Apartments in Glenolden. Garden Court Apartments is a 19 unit apartment complex in Glenolden, PA owned and operated by Bridget Brady and John Brady of Broomall, PA.

In October 2010, Alyxandria Garcia (“Ms. Garcia”), a single mother with a three year old daughter, contacted Garden Court Apartments after reading an advertisement for an available apartment in the Delaware County Daily Times. Ms. Garcia talked to an agent, Shirley Montgomery (“Ms. Montgomery”), who provided detailed information about the available apartment. When Ms. Garcia said that she would be living in the apartment with her three year old daughter, Ms. Montgomery said that children were not permitted. Ms. Garcia ultimately signed a lease in a different apartment community, but it was a considerable distance from her work and family when compared to the available apartment at Garden Court Apartments.

Ms. Garcia contacted FHCS who conducted an investigation, including the use of testers who replicate a housing search to document discrimination. Ms. Montgomery told FHCS staff and testers that no children or teenagers were permitted at Garden Court Apartments and refused to consider a tester posing as a single mother with a young child.

On May 13, 2011, Ms. Garcia and FHCS filed housing discrimination complaints with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In an effort to resolve the complaints, Garden Court Apartments agreed to pay a \$15,000 settlement to Ms. Garcia and FHCS. The owners and agent of Garden Court Apartments admitted no wrongdoing and have agreed to comply with fair housing laws. The owners and agent of Garden Court Apartments will also participate in fair housing training to ensure future compliance.



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The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of familial status, or the presence of children under the age of 18 in the household. In addition, expectant mothers and any adult who is in the process of gaining legal custody of a child are covered under the familial status provision of the Fair Housing Act. Familial status has been protected under the Fair Housing Act since 1988.

“Outright denial of families with children in available housing still occurs at unacceptable rates throughout the Philadelphia region,” said James Berry, Executive Director of FHCS. “Ms. Garcia and her daughter were turned away from an apartment that should have been available to them. Given the current economic conditions, it’s more important than ever that single mothers have equal access to affordable housing.”

The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination in housing related transactions based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability and familial status. Anyone suspecting that they were denied housing for discriminatory reasons, or any housing providers who want information on how they can operate their business in a nondiscriminatory manner should contact FHCS at 267-419-8918 or visit www.fhcsp.com.