

Fair Housing Policy

City of Clearlake

Purpose

The City of Clearlake is committed to upholding and promoting the principles of fair housing as required by Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act), California Assembly Bill 686 (AB 686), and the regulations established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This policy ensures compliance with the requirements of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, including the Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) component, and supports efforts to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH).

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the City of Clearlake to provide equal access to housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, source of income, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state, and local fair housing laws.

Objectives

1. **Prohibit Discrimination:** Ensure housing is made available to all persons on a non-discriminatory basis.
2. **Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH):** Take proactive steps to identify and address barriers to housing equity.
3. **Increase Awareness:** Educate residents, landlords, real estate professionals, and housing providers about fair housing rights and responsibilities.
4. **Promote Inclusivity:** Encourage the development of diverse, inclusive, and accessible neighborhoods.
5. **Align with Outreach Efforts:** Ensure the Fair Housing Policy integrates insights and feedback from the Fair Housing Outreach Plan.
6. **State-Level Compliance:** Ensure compliance with California's AB 686, including integrating AFFH strategies into all housing and community development planning processes.

Definitions

- **Fair Housing:** The right to choose housing free from unlawful discrimination.
- **Protected Classes:** Groups protected under federal, state (including AB 686), and local fair housing laws.
- **Reasonable Accommodation:** A change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, or practice to enable equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities.

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- **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH):** Taking meaningful actions to combat discrimination, overcome patterns of segregation, and foster inclusive communities free from barriers restricting access to opportunity.

Responsibilities

1. **City Staff and Contractors:**
 - Comply with all federal and state fair housing laws and policies in the administration of housing programs.
 - Provide information and referrals to individuals experiencing housing discrimination.
 - Monitor compliance with fair housing requirements for projects funded by HUD and state programs.
2. **Fair Housing Officer:**
 - Oversee the implementation of the Fair Housing Policy and Outreach Plan.
 - Serve as a liaison to HUD, the State of California, fair housing organizations, and community stakeholders.
 - Provide directive for filing of complaints with appropriate agencies and follow complaints of housing discrimination and report findings to appropriate agencies.

Procedures

1. **Training:** Conduct regular training for City staff, subrecipients, and contractors on fair housing laws and practices, including the requirements of AB 686 and AFFH.
2. **Complaint Resolution:**
 - Provide multiple channels for submitting fair housing complaints, including online forms, in-person assistance, and outreach events.
 - Refer complaints to the appropriate enforcement agency (e.g., HUD, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing, or other state fair housing agencies).
3. **Policy Updates:** Integrate findings from the Fair Housing Outreach Plan's monitoring and evaluation into annual updates of this policy.

Disaster Recovery Compliance (CDBG-DR)

1. **Prioritization of Vulnerable Populations:** Ensure that disaster-affected populations, such as displaced residents, low-income families, and individuals with disabilities, are prioritized for fair housing assistance.
2. **Accessible Communication:** Collaborate with the Fair Housing Outreach Plan to disseminate disaster recovery housing information effectively.

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3. **Partnerships:** Work with community organizations to ensure disaster recovery efforts reach all affected populations equitably.

Affirmative Steps to Further Fair Housing

The City of Clearlake will:

- Analyze patterns of segregation and housing disparities within the jurisdiction and its surrounding areas.
- Develop and implement strategies to increase access to affordable housing in high-opportunity areas.
- Integrate AFFH considerations into the Housing Element and all related planning documents.
- Establish a feedback loop to incorporate insights from outreach activities and community engagement into policy updates.

Monitoring and Reporting

- **Annual Reporting:** Submit annual reports to HUD and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) summarizing fair housing activities, outreach outcomes, and policy updates. Use required forms including but not limited to HUD-27061.
- **Evaluation:** Regularly review the effectiveness of this policy and the Outreach Plan, making adjustments as needed to meet compliance and community needs. Update LEP annually based on outreach limitations and responses.

Amendments and Updates

- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect changes in laws, regulations, or community needs. The City will ensure that updates align with federal requirements and California's AB 686 to affirmatively further fair housing.

Adoption and Implementation

This Fair Housing Policy was adopted by the City Council of Clearlake on March 6, 2025, Resolution 2025-12 and will be implemented by all City departments and entities receiving HUD and state funds.

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Contact Information

For more information about this policy or to report a fair housing complaint, please contact:

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