



# City of Cumberland Human Relations Commission

57 N. Liberty, Lower Level

City Hall

Cumberland, Maryland 21502

Phone# 301-759-6659

Email: [fairhousingspecialist@allconet.org](mailto:fairhousingspecialist@allconet.org)

#### Human Relations Commission

Chair, Rev. Joe Darr

Vice Chair, Kim Marker

Secretary, Penny Copman

Kathleen Breighner

Lori Magruder

Russ Conway

Bernard Wynder

#### Mayor

Lee Fiedler

#### City Council

Pete Elliott

Butch Hendershot

Mary Beth Pirolozzi

Brian Brim

## The Cumberland Human Relations Commission

**Commissioners: Chairman, Joe Darr; Vice Chairman; Secretary Penny Copman; Russ Conway; Kathleen Breighner; Kim Weber, Lori Magruder, & Bernard Wynder.**

**City Support: Jay Oliver, Manager Department of Community Development & Darrell Lee Powell, Fair Housing Specialist/Administrator Cumberland Human Relations Commission**

### HRC FACT SHEET

The Mayor and City Council of Cumberland created the Community Relations Commission in the 1960's, and later amended the ordinance to encompass fair housing and providing for enforcement of the Fair Housing Ordinance with the Commission in 1980.

On August 14, 2001, the Mayor and City Council passed Ordinance No. 3380 abolishing the Community Relations Commission, and creating and substituting, in its stead the Human Relations Commission and added additional protected classes. Ordinance 3380 adds protection against discrimination based on familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and age.

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) is a seven-member body responsible for the reduction of discrimination related to housing, education, and employment. This involves the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive educational and action plan; receiving and investigating complaints involving various forms of fair housing, education, and employment discrimination; adopt rules and regulations that allow the commission to carry out its assigned functions; and cooperate with federal and state agencies having similar functions.

Over the years, much of the commission's work has focused on investigating rules that govern Fair Housing Law. Commissioners have traveled to other jurisdictions to learn how similar groups address Fair Housing Regulations. They have also attended conferences and workshops as well as work closely with the Mayor and City Council to educate and inform the public about Fair Housing Laws.

Cumberland's efforts to protect, residents from unlawful and discriminatory housing rental and homeownership practices were give a boost when the City established the Fair Housing Equal Opportunity Office and position of Fair Housing Specialist to assist the Commission



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in administering fair housing programs and enforcement of the law. The Fair Housing Specialist began his duties March 14, 2005. As Fair Housing Specialist, serves as Administrator to the Human Relations Commission and works with City Officials and Commissioners to identify needs, develop potential solutions, and take steps to implement existing Fair Housing Laws.

Since 2005, the HRC's Education and Outreach efforts has penetrated the Cumberland Metropolitan Area and generates Fair Housing information request form citizens throughout the Cumberland, MD, Tri-State Area. The HRC has received and investigated 5 Fair Housing Discrimination Complaints. While the HRC cannot investigate complaints from non-Cumberland residents, it does and has forward complaints from Allegany County Residents to the Maryland Commission on Human Relations and U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). To spread the word about Cumberland's Fair Housing Equal Opportunity initiatives through hosting Fair Housing Conferences and by presenting education and outreach information to tenant groups, disabled community, neighborhood association, landlord association, faith based organization, and others.

One of the HRC's missions is "to eliminate discrimination in housing due to race, ethnicity, sex, religion, disability and cultural differences through advocacy, education, mediation, complaint investigation, and enforcement of fair housing laws." Enforcement based on City of Cumberland Fair Housing Code.

The HRC will establish the Fair Housing Impediments Implementation Committee (FHIIC) to address impediments identified in the City's 2005 Analysis to Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Study. The goal is to have the members of the following categories serve on the FHIIC CDBG RECIPIENTS, HOUSING PROVIDERS, HOUSING COUNCILORS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, CONSUMERS, CONSUMER ADVOCATES, LANDLORDS, LENDERS, DEVELOPERS.

The Federal Fair Housing Act, states that it is "unlawful to discriminate against a person with regard to any housing transaction."

**In the Sale and Rental of Housing:** No one may take any of the following actions based on **race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap (disability):**

**In Mortgage Lending:** No one may take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap (disability):

This includes the sale, rental, or advertising of dwellings, in provision of brokerage services or in the availability of residential real estate transactions.

The **State of Maryland's Fair Housing Legislation** provides the same protections as those within the federal status. However, Maryland's Fair Housing Laws go one-step-further to include, sexual orientation, and marital status as protected classes.

It is the policy of the State of Maryland to provide for fair housing for all its inhabitants **regardless of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, marital status, disability or sexual orientation** "in order that the peace, health, safety, prosperity, and the general welfare of all the inhabitants of the State may be protected and insured."



Mayor

Lee Fiedler

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**Housing discrimination laws make it illegal to:** Refuse to sell or rent a dwelling to any qualified buyer or renter; Use discriminatory terms and conditions in selling or renting; Setting terms and conditions of home loans in such a way as to discriminate; Use discriminatory notices or advertisements indicating any preference or discriminatory limitation; Say that a dwelling is



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not available for inspection, sale, or rental, when in fact it is available; attempt to steer persons into or away from neighborhoods or apartment complexes that are racially segregated; Treat a person differently from everyone else because of race, disability, familial status (parent or legal custodian with children, pregnant) religion, sex marital status, national origin or sexual orientation; Request information about birth control practices; refuse to consider both applicants' income when seeking to buy or rent; and Commit acts of prejudice, violence, harassment, intimidation, or abuse directed against families or individuals or their residential property.

The **City of Cumberland's Fair Housing Ordinance** is similar to that of the Federal Fair State of Maryland Housing Laws but adds age as a protected class.

**Discrimination** means: direct or indirect act, policy, or practice of exclusion, distinction, restriction, segregation, limitation, refusal, denial or any other act or practice of differentiation or preference in the treatment of an individual **based on, or the perception of race, color, religion, natural origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, or physical or mental disability**, or the aiding, abetting inciting, coercing or compelling thereof.

The Cumberland Human Relation Commission holds its regular public meetings on the fourth Thursday of every month at 5 pm in its Commission Office Suite at 13 Canal St., Suite 304, Western Maryland Station Center, Cumberland, MD 21502,

For additional information contact the City of Cumberland Fair Housing Office and Human Relations Commission at 13 Canal St., Suite 304, Western Maryland Station Center, Cumberland, MD 21502, telephone: 301- 759-6659, email: [fairhousingspecialist@allconet.org](mailto:fairhousingspecialist@allconet.org). Our website is [www.ci.cumberland.md.us/citygovt/boards/humanrel/humanrel.html](http://www.ci.cumberland.md.us/citygovt/boards/humanrel/humanrel.html)