



Department of Justice

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Justice Department Resolves Lawsuit Alleging Race Discrimination at Roseville, Michigan Apartment Complex

WASHINGTON - The Justice Department today announced it has reached a settlement of up to \$170,000 resolving its lawsuit against the owners and managers of Regent Court Apartments in Roseville, Mich., who allegedly discriminated against African-Americans seeking to rent apartments at the complex. The complaint alleged that Regent Court Apartments, LLC and Donna Harrison, the leasing manager, engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination against African-American applicants for tenancy.

The Justice Department's lawsuit, which was handled jointly by attorneys from the Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney's Office, was filed in January 2008, based upon evidence developed by *Operation Home Sweet Home*, a concentrated initiative to expose and eliminate housing discrimination in America. *Operation Home Sweet Home* utilizes the Department's fair housing testing program where individuals pose as renters for purposes of gathering information about possible discriminatory practices. The Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit, a private fair housing organization, assisted with the testing pursuant to a contract with the Justice Department.

"The Fair Housing Act ensures that individuals have equal access to housing," said Grace Chung Becker, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "*Operation Home Sweet Home* has enabled the Justice Department to bring this important case and has discouraged landlords around the country from engaging in discrimination."

"Racial discrimination in housing is morally and legally wrong," said Terrence Berg, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. "This settlement represents an important step in our continuing effort to ensure that those who discriminate on the basis of race, or any other unlawful criteria, understand that this will not be tolerated."

Under the settlement, which must still be approved by U.S. District Court Judge Sean F. Cox, the defendants will pay \$75,000 in damages to three victims, who were discriminated against because of their race at Regent Court Apartments; pay \$55,000 in a civil penalty to the United States; and pay \$40,000 into a settlement fund that will be distributed to any additional victims of discrimination at Regent Court Apartments who are identified following entry of the proposed order. The settlement also requires defendants to undergo fair housing training, self-testing, and reporting requirements for the three year term of the decree.

Any individual who believes he or she may be a victim of discrimination based on race at Regent Court Apartments can contact lawyers for the United States by calling 1-800-896-7743, mailbox 3, or 313-226-9727.

Since Jan. 1, 2001, the Department has filed 80 cases under the Fair Housing Act alleging discrimination based on race. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt>.

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