



FHJC 2022-2023 POLICY PRIORITIES

The mission of the Fair Housing Justice Center is to eliminate housing discrimination, strengthen the fair housing laws in the New York City region, and promote policies and programs that foster inclusive communities. We at the FHJC recognize that it is through partnerships and relationship building that we can advance this mission.

In 2022-23, the FHJC will focus on the following initiatives:

1. Strengthening Enforcement of Fair Housing Laws

Increased Engagement and Funding for Testing and Fair Housing Enforcement: We will advocate to increase local, state, and federal government engagement in and funding for systemic fair housing testing and other enforcement activities.

Full Enforcement of Accessibility Requirements: We back stronger regulation of adult homes and assisted living programs by local, state, and federal government agencies. We will advocate for proactive state and local government inspection of construction plans and new developments for compliance with local, state, and federal accessibility requirements, and that state and local governments abandon “self-certification” by architects, engineers, or developers.

Strengthen Vicarious Liability in the NYSHRL: We encourage New York State to explicitly list vicarious liability as a theory of liability by amending § 2. Section 296 of the executive law. This will ensure that owners of buildings and real estate agencies can be held appropriately accountable for the actions of their agents, which will help to facilitate systemic change and increase compliance with the law.

Champion Co-op Disclosure Laws: We urge the enactment of state and local “Co-op Disclosure” laws, which would require housing cooperatives to provide upon request, in writing, the reason for rejecting a prospective buyer/renter.

2. Eliminating Housing Discrimination

Add “Arrest or Conviction Record” to State, City, and Local Laws: We support including “arrest or conviction record” as a protected characteristic in housing discrimination provisions in the state, city, and local laws.

Fight Credit Discrimination: We will advocate for the passage of legislation that will prohibit residential landlords from automatically denying applicants based on their credit history or score.

Improve Homeowner and Tenant Protections: We support the enactment of state and local prohibitions of deceptive, predatory, and/or unfair practices that have a discriminatory effect in the rental and sales market, such as predatory evictions or the non-renewal of residential leases.

Encourage the passage of a Federal Source of Income Law: We support the enactment of federal law to protect millions of Americans from experiencing illegal housing discrimination based on lawful source of income, including housing vouchers and other government benefits.

3. Fostering Inclusive Communities

Advance a Statewide “Equitable Share” Housing Plan: We seek the enactment of a statewide “Equitable Share” legislative housing plan, which would mandate every community to ensure that at least 10% of its existing housing stock is affordable.

Establish a New York State Zoning Appeals Board: We support legislation that would create a Zoning Appeals Board with the authority to override local zoning laws that are discriminatory or present a barrier to the development of affordable housing.

Expand Housing Mobility Assistance Programs: We encourage the expansion of mobility assistance programs, to assist housing voucher holders access housing opportunities in well-resourced neighborhoods and communities.

Legalize and Increase Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): We uplift the expansion of housing supply through the legalization and increase of ADUs. We support ADU legislation that will prioritize the inclusion of fair housing provisions and provide assistance to bring current unregulated illegal accessory dwelling units into compliance and up to safety standards.

Link Fair Housing Advocacy to School Integration: We advocate for more targeted fair housing enforcement in areas that have well-resourced or high-performing schools so that increased housing opportunities are opened to people of color.