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GENERAL NEWS

HUD Announces Web-Based Training on URA

This week on [HUD Exchange](#), the Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)) [announced](#) that it is offering a web-based modular training course on the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 ([URA](#)), a federal law that provides protections for people affected by the acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of real property for federally funded projects.

The eight-part course provides basic information and resources to HUD grantees and funding recipients on URA requirements for HUD-funded projects. Module 1 provides an overview of the URA, Module 2 provides an overview of another federal law known as Section 104(d), and Modules 3 through 8 provide greater technical training on various URA topics.

According to the announcement, the information presented in the training is current as of its posting. However, users should always check HUD's [Real Estate Acquisition and Relocation](#) website for new announcements and updates which could impact the web training material. For more information on the training, click [here](#).

DOJ Settles Sexual Harassment Suit against Minneapolis Housing Providers

In a [press release](#) Monday, the Department of Justice ([DOJ](#)) announced that it has obtained a [consent decree](#) with the manager of residential properties in Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs and several other defendants to resolve allegations that the manager violated the [Fair Housing Act](#) by subjecting 23 women to severe and repeated sexual harassment and retaliation.

The lawsuit alleged that the property manager commented on female tenants' looks and body parts, engaged in unwelcome touching, asked personal questions about their relationship status, made unwelcome sexual advances, discussed sexual topics without consent, entered their homes under the pretense of collecting rent to solicit sexual favors, and offered them rental benefits, such as excusing late or unpaid rent, in exchange for sexual favors. The complaint further alleged that the property manager's codefendants are vicariously liable for his discriminatory conduct because he acted as their agent when he sexually harassed tenants at properties in which they had an ownership interest.

Under the consent decree, the defendants must pay a total of \$736,000 in compensation to 23 victims of the alleged sexual harassment and retaliation, and a \$14,000 civil penalty to the United States. Additionally, the consent decree permanently bars the manager from property management and requires the retention of an independent property manager approved by the Department of Justice at specified properties. The defendants must also undergo education and training on the Fair Housing Act, with specific emphasis on discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual harassment.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits harassment of tenants and other forms of housing discrimination because of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, and familial status. In October 2017, the DOJ's Civil Rights Division [announced](#) the [Sexual Harassment in Housing Initiative](#). The initiative specifically seeks to increase the Department's efforts to protect individuals from harassment by landlords, property managers, maintenance workers, security guards, and other employees and representatives of rental property owners. Since launching the Initiative, the Department has filed 23 lawsuits alleging sexual harassment in housing.



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