



February 10, 2021

GENERAL NEWS

HUD Charges Missouri Housing Provider with Disability Discrimination

In a [press release](#) yesterday, the Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)) announced that it is charging the owner and property manager of duplex apartments in Missouri with discrimination on the basis of disability. The housing provider allegedly violated the [Fair Housing Act](#) by refusing to grant a prospective tenant with a mental health disability a reasonable accommodation to waive the required pet deposit for her assistance animal.

Specifically, HUD's [charge](#) alleges that the property manager told the woman that she would have to pay hundreds of dollars in pet fees and that she did not look like she had a disability. The charge further alleges that the property manager told the woman that rules related to assistance animals only applied to individuals who are blind or deaf.

Under the Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful to deny or limit housing to people with disabilities, including refusing to make reasonable accommodations. Allowing people with disabilities to have assistance animals that perform work, tasks, or provide disability-related emotional support is considered a reasonable accommodation under the Act.

HUD's charge will be heard by a United States administrative law judge unless any party elects to have the case heard in federal court. If the judge finds after a hearing that discrimination has occurred, the judge may award damages to the complainant for losses caused by the discrimination. The judge may also order injunctive relief and other equitable relief, as well as payment of attorney fees. In addition, the judge may impose civil penalties to vindicate the public interest.

Strong Families 2021 Registration Now Open

HUD has opened registration for communities to [register](#) their events to receive updates from federal partners for the 2021 [HUD Strong Families](#) initiative. As you recall, Strong Families is an effort in coordination with PHAs, federal partners, and service organizations to support families living in HUD-assisted housing by connecting them with resources that expand economic opportunity and promote engagement with their children.

Participants may choose to host their events any time during the year but must register to receive informational materials pertaining to this initiative. Events could feature health clinics, resource fairs, and STEM workshops, and could even include community building events such as fun fairs and cookouts.

More information on HUD Strong Families can be found on [this page](#), at HUD's website.



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