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GENERAL NEWS

Treasury Updates ERAP FAQs, Provides New Policies to Expedite Assistance

Yesterday the U.S. Department of Treasury ([Treasury](#)) posted an updated version of the frequently asked questions ([FAQs](#)) for the Emergency Rental Assistance ([ERA](#)) program. The 18-page document, dated August 25, 2021, provides further clarification on the use of self-attestation and describes methods of speeding payments to eligible households. Specifically, substantive revisions were made to FAQs 3, 4, 7, 11, and 38; FAQs 40-42 were added; and additional edits were made for clarity. You can browse [FAQs by category](#) and view all [FAQs changes](#) on the [ERAP website](#). According to the document, these FAQs apply to both ERA1 and ERA2, except where differences are explicitly noted.

The Department also [announced](#) that it is providing additional policies to help grantees continue to expedite assistance, including measures to reduce processing delays by giving even more explicit permission for grantees to rely on applicant's self-attestations without further documentation. You can find more ERA resources on the [ERAP website](#).

DOJ Settles Sexual Harassment Suit against Kentucky Housing Providers

In a [press release](#) yesterday, the Department of Justice ([DOJ](#)) announced that it has reached an agreement to resolve a lawsuit alleging that the manager of a residential rental property in Dayton, Kentucky, violated the federal [Fair Housing Act](#) by sexually harassing female tenants. The lawsuit also alleged that the owner of the rental property is liable for the manager's actions because he managed the rental property on her behalf.

According to the press release, the lawsuit alleged that the property manager harassed female tenants for a period of 10 years. The allegations included that he engaged in unwelcome sexual touching, offered to reduce monthly rental payments in exchange for sex, made unwelcome sexual comments and advances, made intrusive and unannounced visits to female tenants' homes to further his sexual advances, and evicted or threatened to evict female tenants who objected to or refused his sexual advances.

Under the [consent order](#), entered by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, the manager and the owner must pay \$48,000 in damages to four female tenants harmed by the harassment and a \$2,000 civil penalty to the United States. The housing providers are also prohibited from being involved in property management of rental units in the future. The owner recently sold the rental property where the harassment occurred.

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 22 lawsuits alleging sexual harassment in housing.



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Nan McKay & Associates, 1810 Gillespie Way, Suite 202, El Cajon, CA 92020, USA, 1-800-783-3100

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