

Fair Housing Policy

1. Purpose and Vision

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act establishes federal policy for providing fair housing throughout the United States. The intent of Title VIII is to assure equal housing opportunities for all citizens. The City of St. Louis Park, as a recipient of federal community development funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, is obligated to certify that it will affirmatively further fair housing. The City of St. Louis Park strives to advance its commitment to racial equity and inclusion by developing this Fair Housing Policy to further the goal of creating a thriving, safe, and healthy community for all residents. This policy's purpose is to outline St. Louis Park's dedication and response to fair housing issues which includes designating a fair housing officer, referrals, and resources.

2. Fair Housing Policy Statement

It is the policy and commitment of the City of St. Louis Park to ensure that fair and equal housing opportunities are available to all persons in all housing opportunities and development activities funded by the city regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, creed, familial status, national origin, or disability. This is done through external practices that provide access to fair housing information and referral services; and through internal practices and procedures that promote fair housing and support the city's racial equity and inclusion goals.

3. External Practices

a. Fair Housing Officer

The City of St. Louis Park has designated the Fair Housing Officer to be the staff liaison to the Human Rights Commission as the responsible authority for the intake and referral of all fair housing complaints. At a minimum, the Fair Housing Officer will be trained on the complaint process for filing discrimination complaints, and the state and federal agencies that handle complaints.

The Fair Housing Officer will work closely with the housing department for additional support and with organizations in the community. The date, time and nature of the fair housing complaint and the referrals and information given will be fully documented. The Fair Housing Officer will inform the Housing Department of trends, when appropriate, arising from the recording keeping of fair housing complaints brought to the city.

b. Meaningful Access

i. **Online Information.** The City of St. Louis Park will continuously have a space designated for the fair housing policy with additional resources and information on the city website. The website will include links to various fair housing resources, including:

1. The Department of Housing and Urban Development
2. Minnesota Department of Human Rights
3. Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid
4. HOME Line

5. State of Minnesota's Olmstead Plan
 6. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy
- ii. **In-Person Information.** The City of St. Louis Park will provide in-person fair housing information including:
1. A list of fair housing enforcement agencies;
 2. Frequently asked questions regarding fair housing law; and
 3. Fair housing complaint forms for enforcement agencies
- c. **Languages**

The City of St. Louis Park is committed to being a connected and engaged community. To provide information in the native language of its residents and better serve our increasingly diverse population, the city contracts with a service that provides interpretation via telephone. The city will utilize other avenues as needed to provide interpretation services to its residents.

4. Internal Practices

- a. **Staff and Officials Training.** The city will train its staff and officials on fair housing considerations.
- b. **Housing Analysis.** The city will prepare its housing activity report annually and conduct a market housing analysis approximately every five years to examine the affordability of both rental and owner-occupied housing to inform future city actions.
- c. **Code Analysis.** The city will review its municipal code at least every 10 years, with specific focus on ordinances related to zoning, building, and occupancy standards, to identify any potential for disparate impact or treatment.
- d. **Project Planning and Analysis.** City planning functions and review of development will examine fair housing impact of development, including whether potential projects may perpetuate segregation or lead to displacement of protected classes.
- e. **Community Engagement.** The city is committed to providing resources and referrals to tenants on fair housing and tenant rights. The city will also educate rental property owners and managers on fair housing practices and policies. The city is committed to community engagement and public process and seeks to gain an understanding of fair housing concerns from impacted residents. Additional conversations regarding fair housing development, zoning and land use changes may be facilitated by the city.
- f. **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.** As a recipient of federal funds, the city agrees to participate in the Regional Analysis of Impediments, as organized by the regional Fair Housing Implementation Council (FHIC), an ad hoc coalition of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement jurisdictions and others working together to affirmatively further fair housing. The City will review the recommendations from the analysis for potential integration into City planning documents, including the Consolidated Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other related documents.