**UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT AND/OR DISCRIMINATION**

The Housing Authority (HA) strives to maintain rental housing facilities and housing related services that foster harmonious and respectful tenant/landlord relationships and harmonious and respectful relationship between tenants in our rental housing facilities. HA believes that discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation based on protected class constitutes misconduct that undermines the integrity of the landlord/tenant relationship and disturbs tenants’ peaceful enjoyment of their rental housing.

Therefore, the HA prohibits discrimination and/or harassment that is sexual, racial, or religious in nature or is related to anyone’s gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, conviction record, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law. This policy applies to all employees and/or agents of the HA and to all tenants in our housing facilities.

**Definition of Sexual Harassment and other Unlawful Discriminatory Harassment:** Sexual harassment and other discriminatory harassment includes unwelcome sexual conduct or severe or pervasive offensive remarks or hostile behavior because of a person’s race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, conviction record, or national origin, that is so severe or pervasive that it interferes with another tenant’s right to obtain, maintain, use, or enjoy the housing or housing related services provided by HA. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a harassing and/or discriminatory nature will constitute harassment and/or discrimination when the person involved feels compelled to submit to that misconduct in order to obtain, maintain or continue to enjoy the housing or housing related services the HA provides. In addition, if this type of misconduct is so severe or hostile that it interferes with the tenant’s peaceful enjoyment of the rental housing or housing related services or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive living environment in the HA housing, it also may be considered sexual harassment or other type of discriminatory harassment. This behavior can include but is not limited to suggestive or insulting noises, facial expressions, vulgar language, nicknames, slurs, derogatory comments, cartoons, jokes, written materials, and offensive gestures or touching.

The HA expects that its employees, agents, and tenants in its housing facilities will act responsibly and respectfully to establish a pleasant and friendly living environment for all tenants. However, if a tenant feels he/she has been subjected to any form of harassment and/or discrimination as described above, the tenant should report that conduct to the HA Executive Director **within three calendar days of the harassment or discriminatory conduct**. A written Incident form is provided as an attachment to the lease. Tenants are not required to approach the person who is allegedly harassing and/or discriminating against them. An Incident may be submitted by phone, email, or in person. Although the HA prefers that tenants use the Incident form, use of the Incident form is not required. It is most important that the tenant report the harassing conduct to the HA Executive Director or, if the Executive Director is the offending person, then the tenant should report the harassment to the Office Manager, within three calendar days of the harassment or discriminatory conduct. The person the harassment or discrimination is reported to will take the necessary steps to initiate an investigation of the discrimination and/or harassment claim.

HA will conduct its investigation in as confidential a manner as possible. Interviews, allegations, statements, and identities will be kept confidential to the extent possible and allowed by law. However, HA cannot guarantee confidentiality and HA will not allow the goal of confidentiality to be a deterrent to an effective investigation. A timely resolution of each Incident will be reached and communicated to the victim tenant and to the person who allegedly harassed the tenant. Appropriate corrective action, up to and including eviction (if a tenant is the offending party) will be taken promptly against any tenant engaging in discrimination and/or harassment. The corrective action issued will be proportional to the severity of the conduct. The alleged harasser’s rental history and any similar Incidents of prior unlawful discrimination and/or harassment will be taken into consideration.

HA prohibits retaliation of any kind against tenants, who, in good faith, report harassment and/or discrimination or assist in investigating such Incidents. If a tenant feels he/she has been subjected to any form of retaliation, the tenant should report that conduct to the Executive Director, or the Office Manager (if the Executive Director is the offending person) **within three calendar days of the alleged retaliation conduct.**  Tenants are not required to approach the person who is retaliating against them.

In addition to filing an Incident Report with the HA Executive Director, a tenant may also file a Fair Housing Act Complaint. A Fair Housing Act Complaint can be filed:

1. With HUD online at: [https://www.hud.gov/program\_offices/fair\_housing\_equal\_opp/online-Incident](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint)
2. With HUD by phone at: (800)669-9777;FederalRelay Service/TTY: (800) 877-8339.
3. With a State or local fair housing agency: https//www.hud.gov/program\_offices/fair\_housing\_equal\_opp/partners/FHAP/agencies .

For more information tenants can also go to: <https://www.hud.gov/program_officesfair_housing-equal_opp/LGBT_Housing_Discrimination> .