



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

News Release

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Human Relations Department Investigates Allegation of Discriminatory Rental Rates

County Works with Housing Choice Voucher Holders to File Complaints with State

FREDERICK, Md. – Frederick County's Human Relations Department recently launched an investigation into claims that households with Housing Choice Vouchers were being charged higher rents than other tenants in the same complex. Approximately 28 households were affected. The County's Division of Housing notified these residents and will be working with them in the coming weeks to file complaints with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, and to determine if their monthly rent amount will change as a result.

"When our most vulnerable residents are victimized by discriminatory housing practices, it affects our entire community, with taxpayers bearing the brunt of the cost," County Executive Jessica Fitzwater said. "Affordable housing is one of my top priorities, because every person deserves a safe, affordable place to live."

Maryland and Frederick County laws prohibit discrimination in housing based on the source of a person's income. The value of a Housing Choice Voucher is considered income, therefore a tenant cannot be charged higher rent because they receive a portion of their income from housing assistance.

"We are currently trying to assist any voucher recipient that may have been impacted by this issue," Human Relations Director Anthony L. Russell said. "We have been in constant communication with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights to make sure they receive all of the information from our Frederick County residents."

Frederick County residents who think they are victims of discriminatory practices in housing, employment, or public accommodations should contact Mr. Russell at 301-600-1110, or by emailing ALRussell@FrederickCountyMD.gov. Discrimination complaints also can be filed [online](#). The Human Relations Department investigates complaints in a fair, confidential and timely manner, and fashion appropriate remedies when illegal discrimination is found to exist. To learn more, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/HumanRelations.

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