



For Immediate Release – July 29, 2021

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FAIR HOUSING CENTER AND RESIDENT WITH DISABILITY REACH SETTLEMENT WITH INDIANA LANDLORD ACCUSED OF DISCRIMINATION

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – Today, the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) and a former Hartford City, Indiana resident with disabilities announce a settlement in a federal Fair Housing Act lawsuit against Hartford Place, L.P. and CrownPointe Communities, LLC. As part of the consent decree, defendants will pay \$35,000 in monetary relief to resolve the lawsuit which alleged that the Hartford Place Apartments and its agents discriminated against persons with disabilities by adopting a mandatory “independent living” policy.

The lawsuit was filed in October 2020 in the Northern District of Indiana alleging that Hartford Place Apartments, a 55 and older community, engaged in unlawful housing discrimination by requiring residents to complete a mandatory “independent living” form to ensure that residents could live independently. The form also included criteria to determine the degree in which a resident could live independently or not. If residents were unable to live independently, “relocation may be initiated.” The policy in question stated, “POLICY: Hartford Place Apartments is an affordable rental housing community for independent older adults. In order to maintain Hartford Place, the residents must be able to live independently. Any assistance with activities of daily living must be limited in scope and duration. The interpretation of this policy rests exclusively with the Management of Hartford Place. If the physical/mental status [of a resident] does not meet these criteria, relocation may be initiated.” Defendants have denied the allegations and admitted no wrongdoing as part of the settlement.

“‘Independent living’ is a term used to describe senior housing communities that do not provide medical or other support services; however, the term often leads housing providers to unlawfully require that residents live ‘independently’ or without help or aid,” stated Amy Nelson, Executive Director of the FHCCI. “Residents with disabilities who need help with personal care, chores, maintaining their unit, etc. should not be excluded from independent living communities and must be allowed to bring in outside resources to assist them in those daily tasks.”

Under the consent decree, defendants will also be required to rescind any “independent living” policies, provisions, or rules; notify every resident that no such “independent living” policies, provisions, or rules apply; distribute fair housing-related publications to all residents for educational purposes; and attend fair housing training; along with other relief.

“Hoosiers with disabilities know their disabilities best and what housing arrangements are most suitable for their needs,” said Brady Ripperger, Director of Fair Housing Programs at the FHCCI. “Seniors with disabilities also have the right to reasonable accommodations to assist them to remain in their home and live in the housing of their choice.”

The plaintiffs were represented by Chris Brancart of Brancart and Brancart and Tom Crishon of Indiana Disability Rights.

To learn more on this subject, review the [FHCCI's Fair Housing for Seniors in Indiana Guide](#) or visit the [FHCCI Disability Page](#). To download this case's consent decree or to learn more about this or other FHCCI actions, visit its [FHCCI's News Page](#) or its [Advocacy Page](#). If you feel you may have experienced housing discrimination in a housing situation, please contact the FHCCI at 317-644-0673 or info@fhcci.org.

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, non-profit fair housing organization founded in 2011 and based in Indianapolis, Indiana. Its mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities by eliminating housing discrimination through advocacy, enforcement, education and outreach. For more information, visit: www.fhcci.org

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported in part by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the federal Government.