



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 21, 2024

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**Class Action Against Nation’s Largest Single-Family
Rental Housing Provider, Progress Residential,
Filed Over Discriminatory Rental Policies by FHCCI and Indianapolis Resident**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) and Indianapolis, Indiana resident, Marckus Williams, have filed a class action complaint against Progress Residential, the nation’s largest single-family rental provider. This complaint alleges discriminatory practices perpetuated by Progress against Black renters through arbitrary criminal history policies. The lawsuit alleges that Progress enforces blanket bans on certain justice-involved applicants without assessing individual circumstances, disproportionately affecting Black applicants who are systematically overrepresented in criminal justice statistics.

Marckus Williams—an exemplar of personal redemption and community development—was denied housing by Progress due to outdated criminal records, including records that had been expunged, despite over a decade of serving his community. "Being unfairly barred from housing not only challenges my identity; it underscores a broader societal issue of systemic bias," Mr. Williams asserts.

With a management portfolio exceeding 90,000 homes, Progress's alleged discriminatory practices are believed to have a widespread and detrimental impact on minority applicants across the company’s service area. The proportion of Black people disqualified by Progress’s blanket ban on renting to people with misdemeanor convictions between 2019 and 2021 is 4.44 times greater than the proportion of white people affected. For those with felony convictions between 2012 and 2021, the disparities are even greater, as the proportion of Black applicants disqualified is 8.16 times greater than the proportion of white people disqualified.

The complaint details how there are pervasive racial disparities at every juncture of the criminal justice system in this country, including the areas where Progress operates. Black individuals are more likely than their white counterparts to be stopped, arrested, convicted, and incarcerated. By automatically excluding applicants with certain kinds of justice-involvement, Progress's policy disproportionately excludes Black applicants from the company’s thousands of rental units.

"These actions by Progress are not merely against the law—they are ethically unconscionable and perpetuate systemic disadvantage," remarked Amy Nelson, FHCCI’s Executive Director.

This legal action calls for an urgent reevaluation of Progress Residential’s housing practices to safeguard the rights of all rental applicants. The efforts of the plaintiffs aim to uphold civil rights protections, striving to ensure an equitable housing environment free from discrimination.

This class action signifies an urgent call to amend the entrenched policies of this housing provider giant, safeguarding the civil rights of Black rental applicants who have been unlawfully denied residency. Valerie Comenencia Ortiz, an attorney at Relman Colfax, emphasized, "This complaint seeks to dismantle barriers and uphold rightful housing opportunities for victims of racial discrimination."

If you believe you have experienced similar discrimination involving this company, [please contact us here](#). Your voice matters, and by coming forward, you can help ensure justice is served and prevent future harm.

A copy of the filed complaint can be found on the [FHCCI's News Page](#) or [Enforcement Page](#).

The FHCCI and Mr. Williams are represented by Lila Miller, Valerie Comenencia Ortiz, Ellora Israni, Esmeralda Hermosillo, and Jake Hogan of Relman Colfax and Russell Cate and Matthew Keyes of RileyCate.

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, nonprofit fair housing organization based in Indianapolis, Indiana. Its mission is to facilitate open housing for all people by ensuring the availability of affordable and accessible housing; promoting housing choice and homeownership; advocating for an inclusive housing market; working toward stable and equitable communities; and eradicating discrimination within Central Indiana, the State of Indiana, and nationally. 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.