

RESOLUTION #2022-004

FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PLAN

WHEREAS, as a recipient of federal Community Development Block Grant funds through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development received through the State of Maryland, the County Commissioners of Caroline County, Maryland (the “County”) are required to comply with all federal statutes, regulations and Executive Orders relating to civil rights, fair housing, non-discrimination and equal opportunity. The County’s compliance is not specific to the federally funded project or activity. The County must ensure that its administrative practices, policies and laws meet the intent of the statutes, regulations and Executive Orders.

WHEREAS, the County therefore commits to create an environment for its citizens where no one is excluded from participation or benefit due to their race, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, familial status, marital status, age or religion. The denial of rights based on any of these protected classes is detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and constitutes an unjust denial or deprivation of such inalienable rights which is within the power and the proper responsibility of government to prevent.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND that:

Section 1. Fair Housing

In accordance with the federal Civil Rights Act of 1968 (as amended), the federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (as amended), and the Fair Housing Act of 1988, the County will promote through fair, orderly and lawful procedures, the opportunity for each person to obtain housing of such person’s choice in this community without regard to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, familial status, marital status, age or religion.

To the best of its ability, the County will promote and encourage fair housing choice for all its residents. The County’s administrative practices, policies and laws will attempt to prohibit:

- Discrimination in the Sale or Rental of Housing
- Discrimination in Housing Financing
- Discrimination in Providing Brokerage Services
- Unlawful Intimidation

The County will accept complaints from any citizen that feels that they have been discriminated against related to their housing choice. The County will make an initial investigation and refer the complaint to the state or the federal housing departments.

For housing projects developed or assisted with federal funds, the County will ensure that its subrecipients and developers will comply with statutes, regulations and Executive Orders.

Section 2. Equal Opportunity

In accordance with the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), no person in the County shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The County will ensure that it will not discriminate in its procurement practices. The County's procurement policies allow for open and competitive bidding concerning all procured goods and services. When applicable, the County will solicit bids from minority women owned businesses.

Section 3. Affirmative Action Strategy

It is the policy of the County not to discriminate against any employee or any applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, familial status, marital status, age or religion. The County will take affirmative action to ensure that this policy includes but is not limited to the following: recruitment and employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, compensation, selection for training, layoff and termination. Additionally, the County will ensure that our contractors and subcontractors will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment.

Section 4. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The County commits to affirmatively further fair housing in our community. The County's programs will be administered in accordance with efforts to provide a range of fair housing choices to citizens.

The County will undertake the following activities on an annual basis:

- Adopt a Fair Housing Proclamation and celebrate the month of April as Fair Housing Month
- Review local zoning laws and building codes to determine if they impact fair housing choice

Section 5. Excessive Force

The National Affordable Housing Act (NAHA) of 1990 (as amended) requires recipients of federal Community Development Block Grant funds through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to protect individuals engaging in non-violent civil rights demonstrations. To that end, the County is required to develop and maintain a policy of enforcing applicable State and local laws against physically barring entrance to or exit from a facility or location which is the subject of such nonviolent civil rights demonstrations.

The county has a police department for the safety of its citizens. The Sheriff's Office prohibits the use of excessive force by employees of the Sheriff's Office against anyone engaged in non-violent civil rights demonstrations. This is more defined in the Sheriff's Office "Use of Force" policy.

Section 6. Limited English Proficiency

The County recognizes that, as its population increases, its population now includes persons from other countries whose primary language is not English. To that end, the County will make efforts to identify various populations and to provide information to them in a language they understand.

Section 7. Personnel Policies

The County’s personnel policies are in compliance with all federal and state equal opportunity requirements. They are updated as requirements change.

Specifically, employees are notified of their rights, responsibilities and requirements of their specific jobs and as an employee of the County. The personnel policies provide information on compensation, leave, termination, grievances, benefits, sexual harassment, and employee reviews. The County’s personnel policies subject employees to comply with the County’s Ethics and Procurement laws, which provide information about conflict of interest provisions related to contracting and procurement.

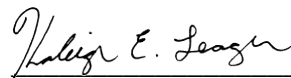
A full copy of the personnel policies may be obtained at the Office of Human Resources during normal business hours.

Section 8. Effective Period

This Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Plan is effective for a three-year period, until May 4, 2025

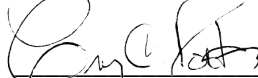
ADOPTED/EFFECTIVE: May 5, 2022

ATTEST:

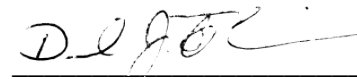


Kaleigh Leager, Executive Assistant
(SEAL)

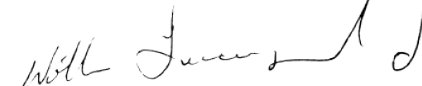
**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND**



Larry C. Porter, President



Daniel J. Franklin, Vice President



Wilbur Levensgood Jr., Commissioner