



HUD NEWS

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - Shaun Donovan, Secretary
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OBAMA ADMINISTRATION TO ENSURE INCLUSION OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY IN HUD PROGRAMS

Commissions first-ever national study of discrimination against members of the LGBT community in the renting and sale of housing

WASHINGTON - U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan today announced a series of proposals to ensure that HUD's core housing programs are open to all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

"The evidence is clear that some are denied the opportunity to make housing choices in our nation based on who they are and that must end," said Donovan. "President Obama and I are determined that a qualified individual and family will not be denied housing choice based on sexual orientation or gender identity."

The initiatives announced today will be a proposed rule that will provide the opportunity for public comment. The proposed rule will:

- clarify that the term "family" as used to describe eligible beneficiaries of our public housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs include otherwise eligible lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender (LGBT) individuals and couples. HUD's public housing and voucher programs help more than three million families to rent an affordable home. The Department's intent to propose new regulations will clarify family status to ensure its subsidized housing programs are available to all families, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- require grantees and those who participate in the Department's programs to comply with local and state non-discrimination laws that cover sexual orientation or gender identity; and

- specify that any FHA-insured mortgage loan must be based on the credit-worthiness of a borrower and not on unrelated factors or characteristics such as sexual orientation or gender identity.

In addition to issuance of proposed rule, HUD will commission the first-ever national study of discrimination against members of the LGBT community in the rental and sale of housing.

HUD expects to begin the regulatory process immediately. The LGBT discrimination study is similarly fast tracked. HUD undertook important research in 1977, 1989 and 2000 to study the impact of housing discrimination on the basis of race and color. It is believed that LGBT individuals and families may remain silent because in many local jurisdictions, they may have little or no legal recourse. HUD's study will examine housing discrimination based on Sexual orientation or gender identity.

While there are no national assessments of LGBT housing discrimination, there are state and local studies that have shown this sort of bias. For example, Michigan's Fair Housing Centers found that nearly 30 percent of same-sex couples were treated differently when attempting to buy or rent a home (http://www.fhcmichigan.org/images/Arcus_web1.pdf).

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HUD is the nation's housing agency committed to sustaining homeownership; creating affordable housing opportunities for low-income Americans; and supporting the homeless, elderly, people with disabilities and people living with AIDS. The Department also promotes economic and community development and enforces the nation's fair housing laws. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at www.hud.gov and espanol.hud.gov.