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South Suburban Housing Center Settles Source of Income Discrimination Complaint Against Springfield Apartment Complex

HOMEWOOD, IL— South Suburban Housing Center (SSHC) the regional fair housing enforcement and housing counseling agency serving the south metropolitan Chicago area and underserved areas of Illinois since 1975, reached a settlement with the owners and management of Pine Ridge Apartments, a 224-unit apartment complex in Springfield, Illinois, resolving a complaint of housing discrimination based on source of income. The complaint was filed with the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) alleging source of income protected class violations covered by the Illinois Human Rights Act. SSHC's investigation of Pine Ridge Apartments focused on gathering evidence of its policy of rejecting prospective tenants using Housing Choice Vouchers to help pay their rent.

SSHC's Fair Housing Enforcement Program conducts monitoring of the housing market through systemic testing, in which volunteers are trained to pose as home seekers and report their experience. In November 2024, SSHC conducted a series of tests inquiring about available apartments. When testers posing as voucher holders disclosed that they would be using a Housing Choice Voucher to help pay the rent, they were told by Pine Ridge Apartment's rental agent that the complex doesn't "take section 8" and that a tenant with a voucher would not qualify based on the complex's requirement that applicants make three times the rent amount. In 2023, source of income was added as a protected class in the Illinois Human Rights Act. Since then, SSHC has made it a priority to investigate housing providers in their primary service area and in southern and central Illinois to ensure that they are in compliance with the new law. Doing so ensures that there is a robust, accessible stock of affordable housing throughout the state.

"The Illinois Department of Human Rights is committed to enforcing source of income protections under the Illinois Human Rights Act," **said IDHR Director Jim Bennett**. "We recognize that compliance with this law is essential to expanding housing access for Illinois residents, and we will continue to work with housing providers and community partners to ensure they understand their legal obligations."

The private settlement agreement between the parties was approved by the IDHR and was incorporated into an Order entered December 9, 2025 by the Illinois Human Rights Commission (agreement and order [linked here](#)) who retains jurisdiction over the terms of the settlement. Major

provisions of the agreement include Pine Ridge Apartments conforming its rental management practices to comply with fair housing law and not discriminating on the basis of a tenant or applicant's lawful source of income, including status as a Housing Choice Voucher holder, and to pay \$6,000 in monetary damages and costs to SSHC.

SSHC Executive Director, John Petruszak, commented on the settlement stating, "Actions to enforce source of income protections under the Illinois Human Rights Act, and resolutions such as this, are necessary to make housing providers aware of their legal responsibilities to make units available to voucher families and actively address the affordability and availability crisis that we currently face statewide."

During the two-year agreement term, the housing provider's notices, listings or advertisements for available units must also feature the Fair Housing Logo and the words "Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) Accepted." Key property management and leasing staff are to undergo fair housing training conducted by IDHR's Institute for Training and Development and cooperate with SSHC's monitoring of its rental practices. In entering into this agreement, Pine Ridge Apartments deny the allegations contained in the charge and does not admit that they violated the law.

The settlement was reached through representation provided to SSHC by Jeffrey Taren with the Seattle and Chicago based civil rights law firm Taren Law Group.

About South Suburban Housing Center

SSHC is the private, non-profit, regional fair housing and housing counseling agency primarily serving over 100 communities in southern Cook, Will, and Kankakee counties of Illinois since 1975. SSHC's mission is the promotion and foster long-term diversity by working to eliminate all forms of discrimination and exploitation in the housing markets. SSHC's Fair Housing Enforcement Services extend to Grundy and Iroquois Counties in Illinois, Lake County, Indiana, and several central Illinois cities. Find out more at <https://southsuburbanhousingcenter.org>.

About the Illinois Department of Human Rights

The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) administers the [Illinois Human Rights Act](#). The IL Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in Illinois with respect to employment, financial credit, public accommodations, housing and sexual harassment, as well as sexual harassment in education. A discrimination charge can be initiated by calling, writing or appearing in person at the Department's Chicago or Springfield office within two years of the date the alleged discrimination took place in all cases except housing discrimination (for which there is a one-year filing deadline). [Learn more about filing a complaint or charge of discrimination](#).