



Department of Justice

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FILES FAIR HOUSING LAWSUIT AGAINST LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA APARTMENT

WASHINGTON - The Justice Department today filed a lawsuit against the rental manager and owners of Barrcrest Manor Apartments, an apartment complex in Lancaster, Pa. According to the complaint, which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the defendants refused to rent an apartment to a visually impaired individual who uses a guide dog, in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

“The services of guide dogs are essential to individuals with visual impairments,” said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “Our fair housing testing program will continue to proactively root out violations of the Fair Housing Act and ensure non-discriminatory treatment.”

The Department of Justice conducted its investigation through the use of fair-housing testers – individuals who pose as renters for purposes of gathering information about possible discriminatory practices in the rental of apartments. The complaint seeks damages to compensate individuals injured by the defendants’ conduct, and seeks to ensure that the defendants discontinue their discriminatory practices.

Fighting illegal housing discrimination is a top priority of the Civil Rights Division. This case was brought as part of Operation Home Sweet Home, a concentrated initiative by Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales to expose and eliminate housing discrimination in America.

Individuals who believe that they may have been the victim of housing discrimination by Barrcrest Manor Apartments should call the Justice Department’s Housing and Civil Enforcement Section at 1-800-896-7743, ext. 2. Anyone wishing to report unlawful housing discrimination should also contact the Justice Department or the Department of Housing and Urban Development at 1-800-669-9777. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt>.

Since Jan. 1, 2001, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division has filed 217 cases to enforce the Fair Housing Act, 97 of which have alleged discrimination based on disability.

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