



# Department of Justice

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## **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SETTLES LAWSUIT WITH ARKANSAS LANDLORD ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department announced a settlement agreement with the owners of Phoenix Village Apartments in Fort Smith, Ark. According to the complaint, filed Friday in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas, defendants Donald Adams, Drennon G. Adams, Lula Mae Cook (aka Lula Mae Dillard), and A & A Investments d/b/a Phoenix Village Apartments, refused to rent apartments to families with children.

Under the consent decree, the defendants will pay up to \$165,000 to compensate victims of discrimination at Phoenix Village Apartments and \$20,000 in civil penalties to the United States. The settlement also calls for numerous corrective measures, including training, a nondiscrimination policy, record keeping, and monitoring.

“All Americans appreciate the fundamental importance of finding a home for our children free from discrimination,” said Rena J. Comisac, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “The Justice Department’s vigorous enforcement of federal fair housing laws helps safeguard the rights of families with children to seek housing without fear of discrimination.”

The Department conducted its investigation through the use of fair-housing testers—individuals who pose as renters for the purpose of gathering information about possible discriminatory practices in the rental of apartments. This investigation revealed that the defendants discriminated on the basis of familial status.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability and familial status. Since Jan. 1, 2001, the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division has filed 240 cases to enforce the Fair Housing Act, 47 of which have alleged discrimination based on familial status. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt>. Individuals who believe that they may have been victims of housing discrimination at Phoenix Village

Apartments can call the Housing Discrimination Tip Line (1-800-896-7743, option number 94), email the Justice Department at [fairhousing@usdoj.gov](mailto:fairhousing@usdoj.gov), or contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at 1-800-669-9777.

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