

CHICOPEE HOUSING AUTHORITY

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY AND COMPLIANT PROCEDURE

March 17, 2025

I. Nondiscrimination Statement

The Chicopee Housing Authority, in compliance with federal and state law and with respect for diversity among people served by the CHA, forbids unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, class, color, creed, gender identity, genetic information, income, marital or family status (including the presence of children), national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, source of income or existence of rent subsidy, or veteran status. The CHA also prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical, mental, or emotional disability and will make reasonable efforts to accommodate any person who is otherwise qualified for CHA services. The CHA will not condone discrimination or harassment by or against any of its officers, employees, agents, tenants, or applicants for housing.

II. Complaint Procedure

If you believe you have been discriminated against or harassed, you may file a complaint using this procedure. Or you may also utilize the CHA Grievance Procedure. All complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

- a. In order to initiate the process, you must submit a written, signed complaint to the CHA office at 128 Meetinghouse Road, Chicopee, MA 01013. If your complaint is against the Executive Director, you may submit your complaint to the Chair of the CHA Board of Commissioners or, if you prefer, to the U.S Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) Office of Fair Housing, 10 Causeway Street, Boston, MA (800) 827-5005. The complaint must specify, in detail, what occurred, when it occurred, who was involved, and the names of all the witnesses. You must also submit any supporting documents.

- b. The complaint Procedure shall provide that any CHA employee or member of Board of Commissioners alleged to have engaged in discriminatory harassment, coercion, intimidation, or threats, including the use of racial epithets and derogatory language, shall not participate in the evaluation or investigation if the complaint, or influence or attempt to influence the evaluation or investigation of the complaint in any way. Such complaints must be investigated and evaluated by The Executive Director, an employee, board member, or third party who is not the subject of the complaint and who does not report to anyone alleged to have participated in the discriminatory conduct. Any complaint involving discrimination, harassment, coercion, intimidation, or threats by the Executive Director or a member if the Board of Commissioners shall be evaluated by the Board of Commissioners or an independent third-party investigator hired by the Board of Commissioners. The results of the investigation and recommended resolution shall be reported to the Board of Commissioners. Any member of the Board of Commissioners alleged to have participated in any way in the acts alleged in the Complaint shall be recused from investigating or considering the Complaint.
- c. The investigation will begin within seven (7) days of filing and will be completed within thirty (30) days of your filing, unless compelling reasons prevent this from occurring.
- d. The person conducting the investigation will, at a minimum, separately interview you, the person whom you have charged with discrimination or harassment, and all witnesses. Each person interviewed will be asked to sign a written statement about the incident(s).
- e. The person conducting the investigation will take all reasonable steps, consistent with a thorough investigation of the complaint, to protect your confidentiality and will instruct all those that she or he deals with to do the same.
- f. The person conducting the investigation will prepare a written report of her or his findings and will recommend an official response (such as discipline of the employee, appropriate disposition of an

application, decision of inability to determine the validity of the charge, etc.). That report will be submitted to the Executive Director, for implementation of any suggested official response. A copy will also be provided to you and the person whom you have charged with discrimination or harassment. Official copies will be maintained confidentially by CHA.

- g. Both you and the person whom you have charged with discrimination or harassment may submit further relevant information within seven (7) days of receiving the report. The person conducting the investigation will reconsider the report in a timely manner if new information is received.
- h. The person conducting the investigation is encouraged to mediate and resolve the dispute short of official action.

III. Retaliation Prohibited

In accordance with applicable law, the CHA forbids retaliation against a person who has filed a complaint of discrimination or harassment. Any retaliation by an employee may be grounds for disciplinary action in accordance with CHA policy. Any retaliation by a tenant may constitute a lease violation, with consequences determined in accordance with relevant CHA processes.

IV. Posting of Policy

This policy will be conspicuously posted on the CHA website to be available to all employees, tenants, applicants for housing, and other interested persons.