

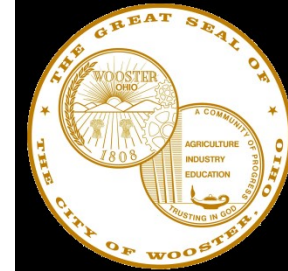


2019 CITY OF WOOSTER FAIR HOUSING RESOURCES & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

*Learn about Fair Housing Rights and how the
City promotes Fair Housing and
Community Development*

*Presented by: Jonathan Millea, AICP – Fair Housing Development Coordinator
City of Wooster, 538 N. Market, Wooster, OH.
Jmillea@woosteroh.com / 330.263.5250*

Welcome and About Wooster's Program



The Wooster Fair Housing Program is available during normal business hours to answer questions about Fair Housing issues. For the Fair Housing Office (and Development Coordinator), please call:

330.263.5200 Ext. 300

We will document your complaint and provide you with resources that may be able to assist you. We will help you to get to the right place.

www.woosteroh.com/Fair-Housing



City of Wooster's Fair Housing Program & Guide

*Ensuring Opportunities For Wooster's
Current and Future Residents*



The City of Wooster Fair Housing Program is available to answer questions, record complaints, offer referrals, and provide education on housing rights. We are also able to assist in filing fair housing complaints or property maintenance complaints.

"It is hereby designated to be the policy of the City to do all of the things necessary and proper to secure for all its residents their right to equal housing opportunities regardless of their race, color, creed, sex, religious belief, national origin, handicap or familial status." (Wooster City Ord. No. 1991-34 Passed 6-3-91.)

Have a Question or an Issue to Report? Contact Us:

1.330.263.5200 Ext. 300

***City of Wooster Fair Housing Program
Or 330.287.5420 if calling outside of the City***

City of Wooster and Fair Housing



"It is hereby designated to be the policy of the City to do all of the things necessary and proper to secure for all its residents their right to equal housing opportunities regardless of their race, color, creed, sex, religious belief, national origin, handicap or familial status." (Ord. 1991-34. Passed 6-3-91.)

Familial status includes non-discrimination of households with children. With regard to disabilities, landlords are generally required to provide reasonable accommodations to assist persons with disabilities.

Fair Housing

- Why It Matters



- Laws protecting people from discrimination against **race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, ancestry, or military status** is an essential consumer protection.
- Such unlawful discrimination hurts the entire community through limiting individual freedoms as well as access to housing and economic opportunities.
- Reporting illegal discrimination is not only important for protecting oneself, but also for protecting others and the community from future discrimination.



Wooster Fair Housing Course – Feb. 5, 2019

Fair Housing and Reporting Discrimination



- Those who feel they are being treated unfairly should take the following steps to protect themselves:
 - Keep a record of any meetings and phone calls with landlords, property managers, real estate agents, loan officers, or insurance agents.
 - Write down what happened and what was said by all participants. Save all receipts, applications, leases, business cards, brochures, or other documents that were given.
 - Call the City of Wooster Fair Housing Program at:

330.263.5200 Ext. 300

If calling about a housing concern outside of City Limits, please call 330.287.5420 for the Wayne County Fair Housing Program to receive information on specific help available in your community

Wooster's Fair Housing Program



The City of Wooster Fair Housing Program is available to answer questions, provide education on housing rights, and to help direct assist in filing fair housing complaints. Fair housing is the unlawful discrimination of persons or families based on **race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, ancestry, or military status.**

Wooster's Fair Housing Program –Mechanics



Wooster Fair Housing Contact

Complaint Intake

Record General Information

Assistance with filing complaints with HUD or OCRC

Education (Trainings)

*Between 4-5 a year.
Also by request.*

Fair Housing training in each CDBG / HOME target area or target population

Fair Housing education to schools, local organizations, or civic groups

Outreach

Production of effective fair housing informational materials

Distribution to of materials to agencies in Wooster

Thank You!

Analysis of Impediments

Analysis

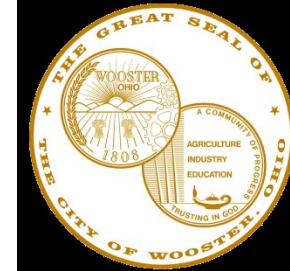
Identification of impediments

Proposed remedies

Action plan with a timetable

Recordkeeping

Fair Housing Violations Occurring in NE Ohio



While great strides have been made in our region to ensure equal access to housing, discrimination remains a threat to the health, welfare, and economic future of our residents and our City as a whole. In the Northeastern Ohio region alone, recent documented fair housing violations have included:

- Single mothers denied housing because a landlord did not want children on their property;
- Apartment complex owners lying to prospective tenants about the availability of an apartment because of their race;

Fair Housing Violations Occurring in NE Ohio



Continued . . .

- A landlord refusing to rent a home to a female applicant because the landlord believed it would be too much responsibility for a single woman;
- Clients struggling with a mental disabilities repeatedly turned away from apartments because property managers would not make an accommodation to their policy and allow for an emotional support animal (ESA), despite a physician's written request and veterinary reports certifying animal health.

Impediments To Fair Housing



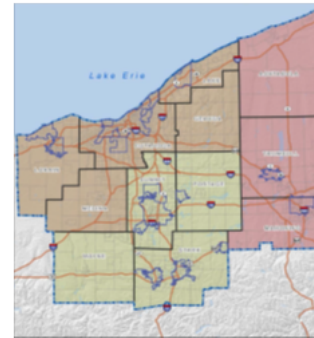
According to a recent Fair Housing Analysis, our region averages of 75 *substantiated* Fair Housing violations a year over the last several years.

See the study online at:
www.woosteroh.com/fair-housing.

- Most common complaints involved violation against **Disabled** persons.
- **Familial Status** ranked #2.
- 3rd most common involved discrimination against **Race**.

NORTHEAST OHIO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CONSORTIUM 2013 REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE AND FAIR HOUSING AND EQUITY ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED City of Wooster 2016 bi-decennial Analysis of Impediments



NEO Sustainable Communities Consortium

NEOSCC and Vibrant NEO 2040 are largely funded by a highly competitive, first-of-its kind, \$4.25 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The Sustainable Communities Initiative is an interagency collaboration among HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Prepared for:
Northeast Ohio Sustainable
Communities Consortium
146 S. High Street, Akron, Ohio 44308
Phone: 330.375.2949
<http://vibrantneo.org>

Prepared by:
Western Economic Services
212 SE 18th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97214
Phone: 503.239.9091
www.westernes.com

For Adoption By (DRAFT):
City of Wooster
538 N. Market Street
Wooster, Ohio 44691
Phone: 330.263.5250
www.woosteroh.com

Ensuring Fair Housing - Disabilities



- Landlords are required to make accommodations for those with disabilities as long as the request does not pose an *unreasonable* burden. Examples may include:
 - Allowing a disabled tenant to install wheelchair ramps or other necessary equipment on a property (usually at the tenant's expense);
 - An accommodation of the landlord's policy regarding pets for someone with an emotional support animal (Landlords may request documentation in certain cases, but are not permitted to charge "Pet Rent" fees for an ESA);
 - Or establishing disabled parking spaces.



Ensuring Fair Housing - Familial Status



- Familial status was the second most common substantiated Fair Housing violation found in our region.
- The Wooster Fair Housing Program has received concerns from prospective Wooster residents about encountering landlords resistant to rent to them because they had children.
- Young families with children in particular tend to have less in terms of financial resources than older families whose incomes have naturally risen over time and with advanced experience.
- Not only is denial of housing on the basis of children an unlawful consumer practice, it hurts our families that will power our future economy when they are most vulnerable.
- As a City, State, and nation, we have decided this type of discrimination has no place in any community seeking to be free, economically healthy, and vibrant.

Ensuring Fair Housing - Familial Status



Example: A Portage County landlord had a policy of not renting upper-floor apartments to families with children. When the landlord informed a mother, who met all other qualifications, that she could not rent the only available apartment because she had young children, she decided to speak up:

United States v. Testa Family Enterprises, et al. (N.D. Ohio)

The complaint filed with HUD in October 2010 against the owners and managers of a 26-unit apartment building claimed that the complex discriminated against the mother of a 4-year-old son and a 10-month-old daughter by not allowing her to rent an upper-level apartment. In June 2011 the court entered a consent decree: the defendants must pay \$33,350 to the complainant, \$16,650 to the Fair Housing Advocates Association, and \$10,000 as a civil penalty, as well as attend fair housing training and comply with other standard injunctive requirements.

Ensuring Fair Housing

- Race / National Origin



Race was the third most common substantiated complaint discovered in our region's Analysis of Impediments for Fair Housing (Wayne, Stark, Summit, and Portage counties).

For instance: in 2014, the US Department of Justice reached an \$850,000 settlement over racial and familial status discrimination with John and Mary Ruth, owners of the Thackeray Ledges, Wales Ridge, and Yorkshire apartment complexes in nearby Massillon. The lawsuit stemmed from complaints made by tenants as well as the firm's own property managers. It was determined that tenants and prospective renters were treated differently based solely on their race, which included lying about the availability of apartments and treating existing tenants differently. In addition to the cash settlement, the landlords agreed to be barred from directly managing the apartments, and instead use an independent property management firm.

Ensuring Fair Housing - An Economic Future



- When a landlord takes it upon themselves to unlawfully shut a family out of a housing opportunity, they are actively working to shut out opportunities for our greater Wooster community, which could otherwise benefit from all the civic engagement and economic benefits that the denied family would have been able to offer.
- Great strides have been made in ensuring Fair Housing, but additional awareness and effort is needed.
- Despite the fact that housing discrimination was made illegal over half a century ago, local cases within our region, like many others, still faces challenges in ensuring equal access to housing for its existing and future residents.

Wooster's Fair Housing Services & Partners



Wooster's Fair Housing Program: 330.263.5200 Ext 300

For calls concerning properties or unfair treatment in Wooster City Limits

Wayne County's Fair Housing Program: 330.287.5420

For calls concerning properties or unfair treatment in Wayne County except for the City of Wooster

Additional Housing Resources:

There are numerous resources available to those facing unfair housing practices.



Regional Ohio Civil Rights Commission

Main: 330.643.3100

Website: crc.ohio.gov

Address: Akron Gov. Ctr, 161 S. High Street, Suite 205, Akron Ohio 44308



COHHIO Tenant Rent Info. Line

Main: 888.485.7999

Email: rentinfo@cohhio.org

Web: <http://cohhio.org>



Wooster Building Standards, Planning, and Zoning Division

Attn: Property Maintenance Inspector

Main: 330.263.5200 Ext. 362

Web: www.woosteroh.com/buildingstandards

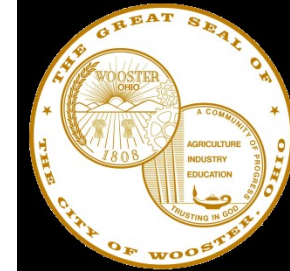


Community Legal Aid:

Main: 1.800.998.9454

Website: www.communitylegalaid.org

Property Maintenance Violations



- Property Maintenance Violations are usually separate issues. In the City of Wooster, Landlords and Homeowners are required to ensure properties meet certain safety codes. Broken windows, lack of heating, significantly leaking rooftops, are serious issues that require immediate repair.
 - Property owners will receive a citation via mail should the City Property Maintenance Inspector find a significant property maintenance concern requiring repair.
 - Tenants experiencing unsafe living environments may contact the City's Property Maintenance Inspector.
 - **Tenants should first write a letter to their landlord requesting the repair.**
 - Property Maintenance Inspector: **330.263.5200 Ext 362**

Emergency Housing Resources



Salvation Army

24/7 access to emergency shelter at 437 S. Market Street, Wooster.
Phone 330.264.4704 Web: <http://www.SalvationArmyOhio.org/Wooster>.



Wayne Metropolitan Housing Authority

Grant programs to assist those in need (Section 8, etc)
Phone: 330.264.2727 Web: <http://wmha.org>



Community Action Wayne/Medina

Assists low-income residents struggling with heating issues
Phone: 330.264.8677 Web: <http://www.cawm.org/>



Habitat for Humanity

Assists low-income families in building homes.
Phone: 330.263.1713 Web: <http://www.waynehabitat.org>.

Economic Opportunities For Wooster Residents

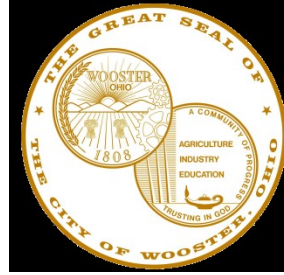


Development Coordinator Services

The City of Wooster strives to cultivate opportunities for prosperity for all of its citizens and businesses. A few exciting programs homeowners or aspiring-homeowners, as well as landlords, should be aware of –

- **Community Reinvestment Area Program:** Receive the same tax incentives as major companies for improving your home or duplex within Wooster's Historic Area.
- **CHIP:** Find grants to Low-to-Moderate Income homeowners and tenants (individuals making about \$32,000 or less yearly) as well as landlords to help fund home repairs and rehabilitations.

Community Reinvestment Area Program



CRA – Community Reinvestment Area

- For Rehabilitating or Building New Single- and Two-Family/Duplex homes in Historic Neighborhoods (South of Bowman/SR585)
- Homeowners save \$400 annually for every \$20,000 invested (\$2,500 minimum)
- Projects may include building a new home, expanding an existing home, or performing a major home renovation.
- Simple roof replacement or new windows alone generally do not change a home's tax value – in this case no CRA is necessary.
- Simple application with project receipts/invoices or proof of investment.



Call: **330.263.5250**

Or Visit

www.woosteroh.com/development

CHIP – Ending Soon Accepting Applications



Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) Grants and Deferred Loans

Helping Homeowners, Landlords, and First-Time Homebuyers throughout Wayne County Repair their Homes and Neighborhoods.



Four Programs To Revitalize Your Home:

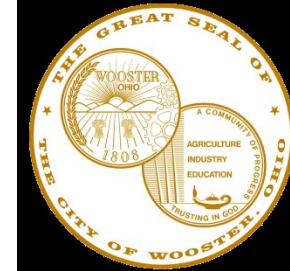
- **Grants** for low-income households for emergency home repairs (including roof, heating, and septic).
- **Interest-free, partially-forgivable loans** for low-to-moderate income households to rehabilitate their homes. (85% of the loan is forgiven after **5 years**).
- **Interest-free, partially-forgivable loans** for first-time home-buyers purchasing homes in need of repair. (85% of the loan is forgiven after **10 years**).
- **Forgivable 10-year loan** for landlords providing a minimum 25% match in rehabilitating units for low-to-moderate income residents.

Moderate-income for a family of four is \$46,700 in Wayne County, or \$32,700 for an individual.

- **Four Key Programs (Waiting Lists Open)**
 - **Homeownership Assistance**
 - Down-payment assistance (85% mortgage forgiven over 10 years)
 - **Private Rehabilitation**
 - Partially-forgivable mortgage for major home rehabilitation projects (85% forgiven, 5 years)
 - **Home Repair**
 - Grants for emergency repairs for low-income households (Roof Repair, Heating, etc.)
 - **Rental Rehabilitation**
 - Grants for Landlords renting to low-to-moderate income persons (25% match required).
- **Contact: WMHA – 330.264.2727 or visit www.woosteroh.com/chip**

*Wooster Fair Housing
Course – Feb. 5, 2019*

Wooster's Fair Housing Program – *THANK YOU!*



Support Your Community

If you have a client or visitor with a concern, please remember we are available to offer advice on area resources that may be able to help.

As always, thank you for all of the important work your agency does, and for your support in helping our Fair Housing program along the way.



Wooster Fair Housing Course – Feb. 5, 2019

Jonathan Millea, AICP
Fair Housing Officer / Development Coordinator
The City of Wooster Fair Housing Program

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