

Fair Housing Through the Years

Milestones in the history of fair housing in the United States.

January 14, 1968

Under a new rule effective Jan. 1, brokers receiving listings of repossessions from the VA are asked to certify they don't discriminate in the sale or rental of VA properties.

April 4, 1968

Civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated.

April 11, 1968

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the quickly passed Civil Rights Act of 1968 containing Title VIII, now known as the Fair Housing Act, making it illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

June 17, 1968

U.S. Supreme Court, in *Jones v. Mayer*, upholds the Civil Rights Act of 1866 prohibiting "all racial discrimination, private as well as public, in the sale or rental of property."

May 1972

NAR issues its Code for Equal Opportunity in Housing recognizing basic fair housing obligations governing REALTORS®: provide equal services and equal employment opportunity practices; don't volunteer discriminatory information on neighborhoods; don't engage in panic peddling; don't display or circulate ad materials that show preference based on discrimination. Those who violate the spirit of the code or any of its provisions are subject to disciplinary action.

August 22, 1974

The federal Housing and Community Development Act adds a prohibition against discrimination based on sex.

1974

NAR, in support of its Code of Equal Opportunity, adopts Article 10 to the Code of Ethics that REALTORS® shall not deny equal professional services on the basis of race, creed, sex, or country of national origin.

December 6, 1975

NAR and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development enter into the Voluntary Affirmative Marketing Agreement, whereby HUD and NAR will "work out programs of voluntary compliance and of enforcement." By 1995 almost all real estate boards have signed VAMA.

1976-1987

Several attempts by Congress to amend 1968 Fair Housing Act fail; the attempts are strongly opposed by NAR. Among the attempts is a provision to fund a Fair Housing Initiatives Program in the proposed 1985 and 1986 federal budgets that would provide \$4 million for "testing." In 1987, NAR proposes that the FHIP testing program go forward as a "demonstration" program that would include guidelines acceptable to NAR; Congress approves. It becomes a full-fledged government program in the early '90s. (*More on FHIP and testing in next month's issue.*)

1982

U.S. Supreme Court, in 9-0 decision in *Havens Realty Corp. v. Coleman*, 455 U.S. 363 (1982), upholds ability of a fair housing organization and a black tester, who was given false housing information because of his race, to bring a suit.

September 13, 1988

NAR actively supports the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988. Bill is approved by 94-3 vote in the Senate and a 367-23 vote in the House. The legislation is signed by President Reagan on Sept. 13.

The new law

1. Guarantees due process of law for defendants; provides for redress in administrative law proceedings as well as in federal court - a key NAR victory
Allows governmental agencies to investigate and prosecute discrimination cases, replacing a tedious process of establishing patterns of discrimination
Sets penalties for violations, ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000
Provides protection for families with children under 18; exempts senior citizen communities that meet certain standards
Provides protection for disabled and handicapped citizens

February 10, 1989

HUD issues final rules on Fair Housing Initiatives Program, including guidelines acceptable to NAR on use of testing.

December 5, 1996

NAR and HUD sign new Fair Housing Partnership Agreement to jointly identify and address fair housing issues and concerns and promote fair housing; the Partnership Agreement replaces VAMA.

1997

NAR establishes Cultural Diversity program to improve REALTORS®' business in diverse market populations, assist companies to recruit for and manage a diverse workplace, expand marketing to all population groups, address needs of minority members, and identify and encourage diversity within the leadership of NAR.

April 2001

A partnership of six real estate associations including the NAR announced a new national awards program to recognize outstanding contributions by individuals and organizations to promote homeownership by minorities. Each of the winners of the HOPE Awards ("Home Ownership Participation for Everyone") will receive a \$10,000 prize. Categories for the awards include homeownership education, finance, project of the year, real estate brokerage, public policy, media coverage and leadership.

NAR joined with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) and other housing industry groups including major lenders, financial institutions and community-based organizations, in a new initiative to add one million new African-American families to the homeownership roles by the year 2005. The program will be launched in the 37 Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) member districts including: Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and

Washington, DC.

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