



## Fair Housing Advocacy Committee

Description 9.23.15

---

### Background

As part of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) Report required by HUD the “*City of Portland, Gresham & Multnomah County 2011 Fair Housing Plan, An Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and the Strategies to Address Them*”, referred to throughout this description as the Fair Housing Plan, the City of Portland, on behalf of its jurisdictional partners, was tasked with collecting and analyzing data that identifies barriers to housing choice, and with developing a report that outlines strategies to mitigate the identified barriers.

In order to bring knowledgeable community voices into preparation of the report, Portland and its Consortium partners Multnomah County, City of Portland, and the City of Gresham convened the Analysis of Impediments Committee (AI Committee) to recommend and review research data and make recommendations on strategies to remove barriers to housing choice. The resulting Fair Housing Plan identified a number of key barriers to exercising housing choice, including a general lack of understanding by housing consumers and housing providers of Fair Housing Law, as well as the need for a clear, focused fair housing champion. In response, the AI Committee suggested creating a “Fair Housing Advocacy Committee” that meets at least quarterly to focus on the implementation of fair housing strategies and to be a strong advocate voice in Multnomah County.

Portland City Council formally adopted the Fair Housing Plan (Analysis of Impediments Report) on June 15, 2011. Council also adopted the Fair Housing Action Plan on September 14, 2011.

### Mission of the Fair Housing Advocacy Committee

The purpose of the Fair Housing Advocacy Committee (FHAC), as recommended in the Fair Housing Plan, is to provide a strong advocate voice in Multnomah County for the implementation of the recommendations in the Fair Housing Plan. FHAC will hold jurisdictional partners of Multnomah County accountable for their actions under the Fair Housing Plan. FHAC will also lead the next Assessment of Fair Housing in advance of the next five-year Consolidated Plan.

## **Committee Scope**

The work of the FHAC will include development of a committee work plan prioritizing the recommendations made in the Fair Housing Plan, which includes review of data complaint and enforcement and audit testing data, review and endorsement of best practices, coordination of public information campaigns, suggesting policies for adoption by jurisdictions, and advocating for the resources that will support effective approaches to affirmatively furthering fair housing.

FHAC recommendations and actions will be advisory to the jurisdiction members of the Consortium.

Actions will be carried out by jurisdictions through policy, contracts, Intergovernmental Agreements or other forms of commitment.

The FHAC will report annually to the jurisdictional members of the Consortium and the Portland Housing Bureau's Portland Housing Advisory Commission (PHAC) on key findings and recommendations related to implementation of the Fair Housing Plan and the Assessment of Fair Housing.

## **Committee Membership**

### *Fair Housing Advocacy Committee (FHAC):*

The FHAC will represent a diversity of expertise, skills and viewpoints related to Fair Housing such as members of tenant rights groups, landlords and property managers, financial institutions, community based housing providers, government, organizations representing members of protected classes, as defined under federal state or local civil rights law, and the general public.

The FHAC will be comprised of up to 19 individuals ranging from housing consumers to housing industry experts.

Each jurisdiction and organization is allotted the following number of committee seats per the attached table (see Exhibit A); the City of Portland four (4) seats, Multnomah County four (4) seats and the City of Gresham three (3) seats. Home Forward has one (1) seat. Up to six (6) members will be at-large and will be recommended by the identified community based organizations listed in the organizational chart or other organizations that serve or support impacted populations. While the committee reserves the right to reject an at-large recommendation, the committee members recommended by the participating organizations, are presumed to be accepted. If a member resigns FHAC may choose another organization to participate and that organization would choose the person to represent them. The at-large organizations can include, but are not limited to, the following; the Coalition of Communities of Color, the Center for Intercultural Organizing, the Portland Commission on Disability, Legal Aid Services of Oregon and the Fair Housing Council of Oregon.

All nominations should be made to assure inclusion of a broad spectrum of protected classes, housing consumers and housing industry perspectives. If these organizations are already represented in a jurisdiction seat they will not necessarily be assigned an additional seat.

### **Substitutes**

Periodic substitutes are allowed, but are discouraged, because FHAC only meets quarterly. The Committee prefers that the substitute be the same person.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

If there is a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, members should make it known, record the conflict of interest, and recuse themselves from decision making, as appropriate.

### **Terms**

Members serve a five year term. The five year term represents the implementation of the five year Consolidated Plan and its associated Fair Housing Action Plan. The Fair Housing Advocacy Committee will be reformed for each five-year consolidated planning period. The number of members, represented organizations, terms, and all other conditions of this committee are permitted to change by agreement of the jurisdictions.

### **Resignations**

Members that resign, will be replaced by an individual selected by the organization the previous member represented. The member has full voting and participation rights. If a jurisdiction representative resigns, the jurisdiction has the authority to replace them using the process they normally use. While the jurisdiction reserves the right to reject a recommendation from the organization previously represented, it is presumed that the jurisdiction will accept the recommendation by the participating organization, and the recommended person will become a permanent member. The seat does not need to be refilled if the jurisdiction or at large organization chooses to not reassign the seat. However, every jurisdiction must be represented by at least one member. In the case of the at-large seat not represented by an organization, FHAC will advertise the seat and choose a new nominee to replace them. All appointment decisions should be designed to ensure diversity, as described above.

### **Nominations**

Each jurisdiction and partner organization will follow their typical nomination process for the seat they are responsible for filling. The participating jurisdictions and partner organizations are

encouraged to advertise openings and seek members of an underrepresented groups to fill the seat. If the FHAC at-large seat becomes vacant, they will advertise the vacancy and create a selection committee to recommend a nominee.

### **Steering Committee and Chair(s)**

FHAC will choose its Chair or co-Chairs from the membership. Members may self-nominate. The Chair(s) will be the official spokespersons of FHAC for the media and other inquiries. FHAC may, or may not, choose to form a steering committee or other sub-committees to perform the work of the committee between the quarterly meetings.

### ***Technical Sub-Committee (s)***

The following partners (not an exhaustive list) may be asked to join a technical sub-committee(s): PHB, Multnomah County, City of Gresham, Home Forward, METRO, Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors, Bureau of Labor & Industries, Legal Aid Services of Oregon and Fair Housing Council of Oregon. The sub-committee, along with staff, will serve as a resource to the FHAC in planning, organizing analysis of data, and conducting public meetings and hearings.

### ***Committee Staff Support***

PHB staff will provide the primary staff support to the committee and will be assisted by Multnomah County and Gresham staff. Consortium-wide staff and other partners will be asked to provide technical expertise.

Staff will develop written recommendations for carrying out the actions outlined in the Fair Housing Plan, and after feedback from the FHAC, staff will ask the FHAC to endorse those actions.

Staff will also advise the FHAC on technical issues related to resources, legal considerations, obligations, collecting data and providing a preliminary analysis of data related to housing impediments and barriers. Staff from the participating agencies will work to communicate and implement strategies that affirmatively further fair housing.

### **Duration and Number / Frequency of Meetings**

The FHAC, established in fall 2011, will meet at least quarterly for five years or until the completion of the Fair Housing Plan for that planning period. The next Fair Housing Plan period runs from 2016- 2020.

### **Facilitation**

A chair or co-chairs will be selected to work with staff in the facilitation of committee meetings. The staff and chair(s) will develop the meeting agendas.

## Decision Making Process

FHAC members will work in an inclusive and participatory manner and make decisions based on consensus. Decisions, recommendations and reports are advisory to the jurisdictions.

The FHAC will periodically solicit public input on the Fair Housing Plan and the periodic Fair Housing Assessment. As such, FHAC members are expected to listen, review and discuss various points of view, data and public testimony on housing barriers and impediments, and determine which priority Fair Housing Plan actions are most effective to eliminate housing choice impediments for people who are historically underrepresented or members of a protected class.

In the event that consensus may not be achieved, due to time constraints or disagreement, the committee will work towards endorsement of a strategy and include a minority report to include points of contention. For decisions requiring a quorum, a quorum will be considered half of the members plus one.

## Roles and Responsibilities of Members

- Attend all FHAC meetings and other related public activities and advise staff in advance of meeting absences or substitutes.
- Review agenda and meeting information in advance of the meeting.
- Keep the organization or community you represent informed of issues and activities, and reflect the position of the organization or community in discussion and votes of the FHAC.
- Assist PHB project staff in identifying and informing other community stakeholders regarding fair housing implementation.
- Use consensus to form preferred recommendations and document the rationale for decisions.
- Inform FHAC members and the jurisdiction staff of media inquiries.
- When speaking about FHAC to the media speak from the perspective of yourself or your organization.

## Exhibit A

### FHAC Committee Structure

City of Portland	4 seats
Multnomah County	4 seats
City of Gresham	3 seats
Home Forward	1 seat
Coalition of Communities of Color- at large	2 seats

Center for Intercultural Organizing- at large	1 seat
Fair Housing Council of Oregon- at large	1 seat
City of Portland, Commission on Disability, at large	1 seat
Legal Aid Services of Oregon	1 Seat
At-large	1 seat
Total seats	19 seats

See the attached roster for a list of current members and their affiliation.