



Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc.

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Housing rights group represents disabled Army veteran unlawfully evicted with her children in Yorktown

(Richmond, VA – March 12, 2025) – Tiera McLeish, a disabled Army veteran, has filed suit in York County General District Court against MOYORK, LLC, which functions as the landlord for The Commonwealth at York, an apartment complex in Yorktown, alleging multiple acts of unlawful housing discrimination. McLeish is represented by attorneys from Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia (HOME of VA).

Until recently, McLeish lived at The Commonwealth at York with her two children. The loss of a job and a major car repair caused her to fall behind on her rent by one month. McLeish, who was honorably discharged as a Sergeant after earning Army Commendation and Army Achievement Medals, among other personal, campaign, and unit awards, reached out to two veterans' groups for help.

Disabled American Veterans, a national nonprofit, and the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, a state agency, offered to cover the missing month's rent. But as McLeish alleges in the complaint, MOYORK, LLC refused the assistance of these groups. The complaint asserts that this was a violation of the Virginia Fair Housing Law, which prohibits discrimination based on the source of funds used to pay rent.

At the time of her job loss and costly car repair, McLeish was also being pursued by an abusive ex-spouse. She made her MOYORK, LLC aware of this fact. The Virginia Fair Housing Law and other state and federal statutes bar housing discrimination against people facing domestic violence.

Despite McLeish's offer of funds to pay her past-due rent and the extenuating circumstance of domestic violence, MOYORK, LLC filed for eviction. McLeish feared that she and her children could suddenly lose their home, so she surrendered the apartment and moved out of state to live with family. MOYORK, LLC then issued her a bill of more than \$17,000 to cover the remainder of her lease. McLeish's complaint alleges that this was another unlawful action, prohibited by consumer protection law.

"I was a good tenant," McLeish says. "I kept the apartment clean and was always careful to check with the management before so much as putting up picture frame." She adds that she had never defaulted on her rent previously and maintained clear and regular communication with MOYORK, LLC while contacting the veterans' groups that ultimately offered their support. "It didn't matter to them at all," she said of the landlord.

HOME of VA attorney Mike Pruitt, a Powell Legal Fellow from the University of Virginia, notes: "This is a clear and simple injustice—a violation of state and federal statutes prohibiting several forms of housing discrimination." He adds: "My client is a disabled veteran and a mom to two kids, which makes her landlord's actions seem even more cruel. We see these kinds of tragedies all too often. Children face more evictions than any other group in this country, and Black moms like Ms. McLeish are evicted at over twice the rate of white folks."

While filing a counterclaim of housing discrimination, McLeish has also asked a judge to see the eviction filing nonsuited, as she has vacated the property, and she is contesting the debt.

This case of housing bias comes at a time when the federal government is pulling back on civil rights enforcement. Last year, according to the National Fair Housing Alliance, a record number of Americans filed reports of housing discrimination. But the US Department of Justice has frozen all of its civil rights litigation. And the US Department of Housing and Urban Development has announced staff cuts of 50% while identifying its Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity among three areas targeted for the greatest number of layoffs. Meanwhile, the Trump administration's so-called Department of Government Efficiency is canceling grants to fair housing organizations like HOME of VA that process more than 75% of all reports of housing bias.

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Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia (HOME of VA), founded in 1971, is a statewide civil rights fair housing organization and a HUD-approved housing counseling 501(c)(3) non-profit. HOME of VA fulfills its mission to ensure equal access to housing for all people by addressing housing discrimination, advocating for effective state and local policy to enforce and expand fair housing, and taking direct action to aid first-time homebuyers, families with homes under the threat of foreclosure, and individuals with Housing Choice Vouchers seeking to move to neighborhoods of opportunity. Learn more about HOME of VA and all its services at HOMEofVA.org.