



Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc.

626 E. Broad St., Suite 400, Richmond, VA 23219

804-354-0641, VA Relay 711, HOMEofVA.org

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Media contact: Lance Warren, HOME of VA, lwarren@homeofva.org, 804-215-7860

HOME resolves federal lawsuit against Sylvan Homes, LLC alleging discrimination against voucher holders

Richmond, VA - Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. (HOME) settled a suit against Sylvan Homes, LLC and Diversified Residential Homes 4, LLC, in the Federal District Court in Richmond, Virginia. The suit arose from allegations by a voucher holder that Sylvan did not rent to voucher holders in Virginia. In 2022, HOME conducted fair housing testing of Sylvan which allegedly demonstrated that call center representatives contracted by Sylvan informed HOMES' fair housing testers posing as Housing Choice Voucher holders that Sylvan would only rent certain homes in Virginia to them. As part of the Settlement, Sylvan has reaffirmed its commitment to fair housing in its established fair housing policies and continued and established fair housing training.

Thomas Okuda Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of HOME stated, "We are pleased to reach this compromise. Tenants who think they might have been discriminated against by any landlord should contact HOME for information or assistance." The settlement resolves all claims between the parties.

In 2020, Virginia added a protection against discrimination based on source of income or funds used to pay for housing to its Fair Housing Law. This statute is intended to protect tenants and others seeking housing from being denied solely on the basis of the type of funds they are using to pay for that housing. This law protects Housing Choice Voucher holders, among others. The Virginia Fair Housing Office and Real Estate Board jointly released a [Guidance Document](#) in 2021 that further explains how landlords should apply this protection.

HOME believes that this 2020 state law is necessary to protect voucher holders, who disproportionately include Black families, families headed by women, families with minor children, and families with members who have disabilities. HOME's legal advocacy highlights for both landlords and tenants that applicants cannot and should not be denied housing only because they receive some of their rent money from the government.

HOME of VA is a Virginia-wide nonprofit investigating housing discrimination and enforcing fair housing laws, and Sylvan is an Atlanta-based corporation specializing in managing and leasing single family homes across the U.S.

About HOME:

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. (HOME of VA), founded in 1971, is a statewide fair housing and HUD-approved housing counseling 501(c)(3) non-profit. HOME fulfills its mission to ensure equal access to housing for all people by addressing the still glaring individual instances of housing discrimination. Additionally, HOME works to tackle systemically divisive housing practices on a larger scale through fair housing enforcement and research, advocacy, and statewide policy work. HOME also takes direct action to aid first-time homebuyers, families with homes under the threat of foreclosure, families facing eviction, and helps families with housing choice vouchers move to neighborhoods of opportunity. At a time when unequal access to housing and credit contributes most to the United States' growing wealth gap, HOME's multifaceted approach is a powerful catalyst toward furthering fair housing. You can learn more about HOME and all of its services at www.HOMEofVA.org.