



PRESS RELEASE
October 10, 2018

Contact: Curtiss Reed
(802) 254-2972
creed@vtpfd.org

**Vermont Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights
Releases Advisory Memorandum on Housing Discrimination**

The Vermont Advisory Committee to U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has issued a [Memorandum](#) examining housing discrimination in the state and whether the state is meeting its fair housing obligations. The Committee decided to study these issues after Vermont Legal Aid released a 2014 report documenting such discrimination. In its report, Vermont Legal Aid described a large set of studies which, cumulatively, led to the conclusion that there is “preferential treatment toward [w]hite testers of U.S. origin without children and without an apparent disability.”

To inform the report, the Committee held a public meeting Montpelier in August 2015. The Committee found that:

- Persistent discrimination against state residents who are members of protected classes under state and federal law;
- Discrimination is often subtle: some individuals do not realize they are being discriminated against;
- Most frequently reported discrimination complaints are on the basis of disability, followed by discrimination on the basis of familial status and receipt of public assistance;
- Discrimination may occur because landlords do not understand their legal obligations under federal and state fair housing laws; and
- Vermont has a shortage of affordable housing, especially accessible and affordable housing, and lacks intermediate housing options for people who are ineligible for housing but cannot afford most middle-income apartments.

“The Committee learned that housing discrimination in Vermont is subtle and frequently happens with a handshake and a smile,” said Chair Curtiss Reed. “The Committee encourages the state to ensure that there is sufficient education for landlords and other housing professionals regarding their legal obligations under federal and state law and expand efforts to inform tenants of their rights under these laws.”

###

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For more information about the Commission and our Committees, please visit www.usccr.gov and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).