

COMMUNITY JUSTICE PROJECT

CJP HIGHLIGHTS

January 2019

The Community Justice Project has offices in Harrisburg, Hazleton, Pittsburgh, Reading, and Scranton. Below are some recent highlights from across our program:

Pittsburgh Office Settles Fair Housing Lawsuit:

CJP's Pittsburgh office filed a Fair Housing Act lawsuit on behalf of the Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pittsburgh and two young families challenging the policy/practice of the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) of denying efficiency and 1-bedroom Low Income Public Housing (LIPH) dwellings to expecting mothers and families with children. Litigation proceeded to dispositive motions, and the case settled. Under the settlement agreement, ACHA has modified its occupancy policy to allow families with children to rent all size units, including efficiency and one bedroom apartments, as long as the unit satisfies the floor and sleeping area requirements of the county health department. All applicants denied such housing from November 2017 through April 2018 will be notified of the changes in policy and provided the opportunity to regain their position on the waiting list, if desired.

Hazleton Office Settles Language Access Complaint Against Private Subsidized Housing Provider:

Several months ago, CJP's Hazleton office settled a language access complaint against the owners of the Center City Apartments, a private subsidized housing provider. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, recipients of federal funding, including subsidized housing providers, must provide interpretation and translation of vital documents to limited English proficient ("LEP") individuals. When Center City Apartments failed to provide adequate interpretation and translation, CJP filed a complaint on behalf of two LEP residents. We ultimately reached a conciliation agreement requiring Center City Apartments to significantly increase its language access services to LEP residents.

CJP also has four similar language access complaints pending against other subsidized housing providers in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Reading Office Helps Chronically Ill Child Receive Emergency Medical Assistance:

Recently, the parent of a child with chronic diabetes sought assistance from CJP's Reading office because her child was uninsured and she could not afford to pay for his necessary medical treatment. CJP assisted the child in qualifying for Emergency Medical Assistance (EMA) for a limited duration, and intends to help the child continue to qualify for coverage after the initial period expires.

Harrisburg Office Settles Class Action Against Background Check Company:

CJP's Harrisburg office, in conjunction with Francis & Mailman, P.C., filed a class action lawsuit in 2015 against Yale Associates, Inc. ("Yale"), a background check company, alleging that Yale was systemically misreporting Pennsylvania summary offenses as misdemeanors, in violation of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. The parties recently reached a settlement agreement that is expected to provide monetary compensation to approximately 1,500 class members. The settlement is currently awaiting preliminary approval from the court.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Over the past several years, CJP's regular sources of support, including IOLTA funds, have been at historically low levels. You and/or your firm's contribution will go a long way in providing effective legal assistance to protect the basic needs and rights of Pennsylvania's poor families and low-wage workers and to assist them in their efforts to become self-sufficient. Please consider making a gift to:

Community Justice Project, 118 Locust Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

Please also consider naming the Community Justice Project for *cy pres* awards/class action residuals.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about CJP, please contact Marielle Macher at mmacher@cjplaw.org or 717-236-9486, ext. 214.