



**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

Bill J. Crouch
Cabinet Secretary

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

**1321 Plaza East, Room 108A
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Marykaye Jacquet
Acting Executive Director

February 2, 2018

Dear Principal/Vice Principal/Counselor/PTO President:

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with the West Virginia Housing Development Fund is announcing its Seventh (7th) Annual Fair Housing Poster Contest in honor of Fair Housing Month (April). The theme for this year's poster contest is: "**Won't You Be My Neighbor?**" This topic helps to open conversations with our youth and the community.

Please find, included in this packet, a three-page handout to distribute to your Elementary school teachers (grades 3rd, 4th, and 5th), and/or middle school teachers, (grades 6th–8th). These pages will provide you with all the necessary information the students will need to create an original poster and submit it to the Commission for judging. Monetary prizes will be awarded to the students' who create the top three posters chosen by our panel of judges. There will be two separate categories for elementary and middle school students. The top first place winners' school will receive a monetary award to help with the purchase of school supplies.

The deadline for the submission to the poster contest is **Wednesday, April 11th, 2018**.

If the curriculum allows, teachers may feel free to discuss the information we've included with their classes, emphasizing the importance of Fair Housing and the West Virginia Fair Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination in housing. Teachers may feel free to not only disseminate the information to the students but to also facilitate the students' participation in this contest. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners, along with the honorable mention winners, will also be invited (along with their parents, if available) to attend the Fair Housing Conference Luncheon where they will be presented with a mock check displaying their award placement, a certificate, their monetary award, their framed poster, and gift certificates for local businesses.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact **Tiffany Caldwell, Housing Investigator II** at (304) 558-2616 or Tiffany.N.Caldwell@wv.gov or **Philip Wright** at Philip.A.Wright@wv.gov

We hope this contest will provide the elementary and middle school students, along with their parents, with a valuable opportunity to learn more about West Virginia's anti-discriminatory housing laws, and will promote and encourage the values of fairness and equality for all our citizens. We look forward to seeing the creativity of our elementary and middle school students in our great state!

Thank you,

West Virginia Human Rights Commission &
The West Virginia Housing Development Fund

West Virginia Human Rights Commission 2018 Fair Housing Poster Contest

April is Fair Housing Month, and in an effort to celebrate and commemorate the Fair Housing Laws in West Virginia, the West Virginia Human Rights Commission is hosting its 7th Annual Fair Housing Poster Contest. The purpose of the contest is to demonstrate non-discriminatory housing for all people regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, blindness, handicap or familial status. The contest theme is **“Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”** Each poster should demonstrate the positive message that all West Virginian’s have the right to fair housing and fair lending practices and thus, have the right to live free from discrimination in the housing of their choice.

Who is eligible? There will be two separate categories:

- Elementary school students (grades 3rd – 5th) in West Virginia’s public and private schools;
- Middle school students (grades 6th – 8th) in West Virginia’s public and private schools.

How do I enter?

- You must create an original color poster - NO larger and/or smaller than 8.5” x 11” demonstrating the theme: **“Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”**
- Any materials can be used: paintings, crayons, markers, pencils, mixed media, photography, collages, etc...
- All entries must be labeled on the back with: student’s name, student’s age, student’s grade, student’s school name, and student’s art or other sponsoring teacher and teacher’s contact information.
- Submit, along with your poster, the entry form attached.
- Student may not submit multiple entries, and may not work in pairs.
- Computer clip art, pictures from magazines and other print media, or any other copyrighted brand or product images **will not** be accepted.

What are the prizes?

The top three winners from the elementary school category and middle school category will be chosen by a panel of West Virginia Human Rights Commission employees and co-sponsor representatives. Awards are as follows:

- **1st place - \$125**
- **2nd place - \$100**
- **3rd place - \$75**

In addition, **the two 1st place winners’ schools will receive \$200.00 for school supplies.** (Note: The school’s administrative staff has the discretion to determine how the monetary award is spent on school supplies.) A picture of each contestant’s poster will be placed on the West Virginia Human Rights Commission’s website at: <http://www.hrc.wv.gov>. All honorable mention posters will also be placed on the Commission’s website. The top Honorable Mention posters will receive prizes as well.

All entries must be postmarked no later than, Wednesday, April 11, 2018, to be considered for top prizes.

Please **fill out the entry form** below and **send it along with your entry** in order to be considered for a prize. Please be sure information is legible and complete or child will be disqualified.

Entrant’s Name: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

Parent’s Name: _____

Parent’s E-Mail: _____

School Name/Address: _____

Teacher’s Name _____ Teacher’s E-Mail: _____

By signing this form, I hereby grant permission to have my child’s name, age, school, and artwork appear in publications distributed by the West Virginia Human Rights Commission.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

financing of housing because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, blindness, disability or familial status (presence of children under the age of 18).

What are some common examples of Fair Housing violations?

- An example of housing discrimination occurs when a landlord tells a family that they cannot rent an apartment or a house because they have children.
- A second example of housing discrimination happens when a landlord tells an African-American or Hispanic family that they have to pay more money for an apartment than a Caucasian family.
- A third example of housing discrimination would be an African American landlord telling a Native American couple that the apartment has already been rented when, in fact, it is still available.
- Another example of housing discrimination occurs if a blind person is not allowed to rent an apartment because they have a service dog.
- “Steering” – a real estate agent only shows houses in certain neighborhoods that are prominent in a specific race or national origin (i.e. only showing Caucasian families houses in mostly Caucasian neighborhoods, and only showing African American families houses in predominantly African American neighborhoods).

Purpose of the contest:

- To create awareness in elementary and middle school aged students of the importance of providing equal opportunities to people of all races, genders, religions, national origins, disabilities, etc....
- To creatively express an understanding of today’s fair housing related challenges.

A note to teachers and parents:

Please note that a parent’s signature is required on each participant’s entry form giving permission for that child’s name, age, school, and artwork to be distributed in publications and displayed at Fair Housing events throughout the state. Entry forms without a parent’s and/or guardian’s signature will be disqualified from the contest.

Original artwork will not be returned to the contestant; however, if the contestant wishes to have their artwork back, they can stop by and/or contact the West Virginia Human Rights Commission at the address listed below after June 29, 2018, to retrieve their artwork.

For more information or with questions or concerns, please contact:

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Sponsored by the West Virginia Housing Development Fund