



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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Cabinet Secretary

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Cameron McKinney
Acting Executive Director

February 7, 2019

Dear Principal/Vice Principal/Counselor/Secretary/PTO President:

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with the West Virginia Housing Development Fund is announcing its Eighth (8th) Annual Fair Housing Poster Contest in honor of Fair Housing Month (April). The theme for this year's poster contest is: **"Fair Housing Opens Doors."** This topic will help to open-up conversations with our youth and the community.

Please find included in this packet, a handout to distribute to your elementary school teachers (we have included 10 copies). The pages will provide you with all the necessary information that the students will need, to create an original poster to submit 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. The top first place winners' school and teacher will receive a monetary award to help with the purchase of school supplies.

The deadline for the submission to the poster contest is **Friday, April 19th, 2019.**

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, employment, and places of public accommodation. 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) to attend the Fair Housing Conference Luncheon where they will be presented with a mock check displaying their award placement, a certificate, their money, 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, Lead 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 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 school students in our great state!

Thank you,

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

West Virginia Human Rights Commission 2019 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 8th 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 **“Fair Housing Opens Doors”** 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?

- Elementary school students in West Virginia’s public and private schools.

How do I enter?

- You must create an original color poster – All submissions should be 8.5” x 11” demonstrating the theme: **“Fair Housing Opens Doors”**
- 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 schools that participate will be chosen by a panel of West Virginia Human Rights Commission employees and co-sponsor representatives. Awards are as follows:

- **1st place - \$300**
- **2nd place - \$200**
- **3rd place - \$100**

In addition, **the 1st place winners’ school and teacher will receive \$200.00 each for 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, Friday, April 19, 2019, 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: _____
<i>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.</i>	
Signature: _____	Date: _____

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 he/she has 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 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 30, 2019, to retrieve their artwork.

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

Tiffany Caldwell, Lead Housing Investigator II
West Virginia Human Rights Commission
1321 Plaza East, Room 108A
Charleston, WV 25301
(304) 558-2616, ext. 76209
Toll-free: 888-676-5546
Fax: (304) 558-0085

Sponsored by the West Virginia Housing Development Fund

Housing

The West Virginia Fair Housing Act allows those living, or wanting to live, in West Virginia the freedom of choice in their housing opportunities. It states that a person cannot be denied the following:

- Renting an Apartment or House
- Securing a Home Loan
- Securing Homeowners Insurance
- Purchasing Land for Home Construction

Based upon race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, familial status, blindness, and/or disability. Furthermore, it states that you cannot be treated differently in the terms and conditions of your housing, or steered to another neighborhood or property because of one those reasons. The Fair Housing Act also provides protection for service animals for the disabled and protects against sexual harassment and predatory lending.

As with the Human Rights Act in West Virginia, the West Virginia Fair Housing Act also protects individuals who oppose discrimination and/or complain about discriminatory practices to management within the company or to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. The Act states that these are protected activities, for which an employer cannot retaliate against an employee for participating.

Employment

The West Virginia Human Rights Act protects employees from unlawful discrimination in the workplace. It states that an employee cannot be fired, denied employment, or treated in a different manner which adversely affects that employee's employment status or environment because of their race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age (40 and above), blindness and/or disability. The Human Rights Act also protects employees from sexual and racial harassment and allows for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. As with the Fair Housing Act in West Virginia, the West Virginia Human Rights Act also protects individuals who oppose discrimination and/or complain about discriminatory practices to management within the company or to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. The Act states that these are protected activities, for which an employer cannot retaliate against an employee for participating.

Places of Public Accommodation

The West Virginia Human Rights Act protects individuals from being denied access or availability to establishments which offer services, goods, facilities, or accommodations to the general public because of their race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age (40 and above), blindness and/or disability. The Human Rights Act excludes jails and correctional facilities from its definition of a place of public accommodation for persons interred within the facility.

As with the Fair Housing Act in West Virginia, the West Virginia Human Rights Act also protects individuals who oppose discrimination and/or complain about discriminatory practices to management within the company or to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. The Act states that these are protected activities, for which an employer cannot retaliate against an employee for participating.

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