



July 9, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kori Schneider Peragine, Senior Administrator
414-278-1240
kschneider@fairhousingwisconsin.com

**Fair Housing Council Applauds New Fair Housing Rule:
Obama Administration Acts to Promote Housing Integration**

Milwaukee – Yesterday the US Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a groundbreaking new regulation on how local governments must work to dismantle residential segregation and support the development of healthy, inclusive communities.

The regulation provides very specific, detailed guidance on how state and local governments, as well as housing authorities, can comply with their existing obligations to “affirmatively further fair housing,” a key provision of the 1968 federal Fair Housing Act. This obligation requires HUD-funded public entities to conduct assessments of housing barriers for people of color, families with children and people with disabilities, and then take concrete, meaningful steps to dismantle those barriers.

For the first time, HUD will provide substantial data on housing, demographics and other local conditions for state and local policymakers to review in determining, among other things, the degree of segregation, concentrated poverty and impediments to equal housing opportunity in their communities.

“Racial and economic segregation remain stark and deeply harmful throughout Wisconsin. Metropolitan Milwaukee is the most racially segregated urban area in the nation, and that segregation wasn’t created by accident,” says William R. Tisdale, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council. “Further, segregation is not just a vestige of our past. It is buttressed and re-created in the present by inadequate public policies and systemic forms of unlawful housing discrimination. We hope that, with this new guidance from HUD, more jurisdictions will act on their obligations to promote integration. We look forward to working with local policymakers to ensure that all people, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, family status or disability, have great housing choices in healthy neighborhoods.”

“This new HUD rule will help all jurisdictions in Wisconsin be more deliberate and strategic about how they use their housing and community development resources to expand access to opportunity for all residents,” added Kori Schneider Peragine, Senior Administrator of MMFHC’s Inclusive Communities Program. “Where you live has a big impact on how your life unfolds. It determines the schools your children attend, the jobs you have access to, your access to transportation, grocery stores, parks and other important community resources. In our region, too many children are growing up in neighborhoods that lack high-quality resources. This not only limits their life prospects, but undermines our region’s prosperity.”

The Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council (MMFHC) is a private nonprofit civil rights enforcement agency. Its mission is to promote fair housing throughout the State of Wisconsin by combating illegal housing discrimination and by creating and maintaining racially and economically integrated housing patterns. It engages in numerous activities to further its mission, including complaint intake, investigative services and counseling for victims of unlawful discrimination, systemic investigations of institutional discrimination, and educational services for housing consumers and providers. MMFHC operates two satellite offices, the Fair Housing Center of Northeast Wisconsin and the Fair Housing Center of Greater Madison.

For more information, please visit www.fairhousingwisconsin.com.

###