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Chapter 160 DISCRIMINATION IN REAL PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS ^[1]

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Sec. 9.361. Findings of Fact.

- (1) That the population of the City of Grand Rapids consists of people of nearly every race, color, religion, ancestry and national origin, of varying ages and sexes, of married and nonmarried persons, of handicapped and nonhandicapped persons, and of those receiving various sources of lawful income including public assistance. Many of these persons are compelled to live in circumscribed areas, under substandard, unhealthy, unsafe, unsanitary and overcrowded living conditions, at least in part because of discrimination in the sale, lease, rental and financing of housing.
- (2) That these conditions have substantially increased mortality, disease, crime, vice and juvenile delinquency, fires and risk of fires, inter-group tensions and other evils, all of which is detrimental to the public health, safety and general welfare of the City of Grand Rapids.
- (3) That the harmful effects produced by discrimination in housing increase the cost of government and reduce the public revenues, thus imposing financial burdens upon the public for the relief and amelioration of the conditions so created.
- (4) That discrimination in housing adversely affects the continued redevelopment, renewal, growth and progress of the City of Grand Rapids.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68; Ord. No. 75-103, 12-23-75; Ord. No. 89-23, § 1, 3-28-89; Ord. No. 2000-40, § 1, 7-11-00)

Sec. 9.362. Policy.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the City of Grand Rapids, in the exercise of its police power for the protection of the public health, safety and general welfare, for the maintenance of business and good government, and for the promotion of the City's trade, commerce and manufacture, to assure equal opportunity to all persons to live in adequate housing facilities regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin, age, sex, marital status, familial status, handicapped status, source of lawful income, or public assistance recipient status, and to that end, prohibit discrimination in housing.

Sec. 9.363. Definitions.

For the purposes of this Chapter:

- (1) *Real property* includes buildings, structures, real estate, lands, tenements, leaseholds, interests in real estate cooperatives, condominiums, and hereditaments, corporeal and incorporeal, or any interest therein.
- (2) *Real estate transaction* includes the sale, exchange, rental or lease of real property.
- (3) *Housing accommodation* includes any improved or unimproved real property, or part thereof, which is used or occupied, or is intended, arranged or designed to be used or occupied, as the home or residence of one (1) or more individuals.
- (4) *Real estate broker or salesperson* means a person, whether licensed or not, who, for or with the expectation of receiving a consideration, lists, sells, purchases, exchanges, rents or leases real property, or who negotiates or attempts to negotiate any of these activities, or who holds himself or herself out as engaged in these activities, or who negotiates or attempts to negotiate a loan secured or to be secured by mortgage or other encumbrance upon real property, or who is engaged in the business of listing real property in a publication; or a person employed by or acting on behalf of any of these.
- (5) *Family* means a person living alone, or two (2) or more persons customarily living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit as distinguished from a group occupying a hotel, club, religious or institutional building, boarding or lodging house, or fraternity or sorority house.
- (6) *Handicap or handicapped status* means with respect to a person:
 - a. A physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one (1) or more of such person's major life activities; or
 - b. A record of having such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment; or
 - c. A handicap, as defined in a. or b. above, if the handicap is one affecting a person residing in or using, or intending to reside in or use, the real property subject to this Chapter, or any person related to or associated with the person engaging in the real estate transaction.
- (7) *Familial status* means one (1) or more individuals (who have not attained the age of eighteen (18) years) being domiciled with:
 - a. A parent or another person having legal custody of such individual or individuals; or
 - b. The designee or such parent or other person having such custody, with the written permission of such parent or other person.

The protections afforded against discrimination on the basis of familial status shall apply to any person who is pregnant or is in the process of securing legal custody of any individual who had not attained the age of eighteen (18) years.
- (8) *Elderly* means a person who is at least sixty-two (62) years of age.
- (9) *Source of lawful income* means consistent income derived from wages, social security, supplemental security income, all forms of federal, state or local assistance payments or subsidies, Section 8 assistance, child support, alimony and public assistance which can be verified and substantiated.

Sec. 9.364. Discriminatory Practices.

It shall be unlawful for an owner, a real estate broker or salesperson, or any other person, because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, familial status, handicapped status, source of lawful income, or public assistance recipient status:

- (1) To refuse to engage in a real estate transaction with a person;
- (2) To discriminate against a person in the terms, conditions or privileges of a real estate transaction or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection therewith;
- (3) To refuse to receive or to fail to transmit a bona fide offer to engage in a real estate transaction from a person;
- (4) To refuse to negotiate for a real estate transaction with a person;
- (5) To represent to a person that real property is not available for inspection, sale, rental or lease when, in fact, it is so available, or to intentionally fail to bring a property listing to the person's attention, or to refuse to permit the person to inspect real property;
- (6) To print, circulate, post or mail or cause to be so published a statement, advertisement or sign, or to use a form of application for a real estate transaction, or to make a record or inquiry in connection with a prospective real estate transaction, which indicates, directly or indirectly, an intent to make a limitation, specification, or discrimination with respect thereto; or
- (7) To offer, solicit, accept, use or retain a listing of real property with the understanding that a person may be discriminated against in a real estate transaction or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection therewith.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68; Ord. No. 75-103, 12-23-75; Ord. No. 89-23, § 4, 3-28-89; Ord. No. 2000-40, § 4, 7-11-00)

Sec. 9.365. Exemptions.

The provisions of [Section 9.364](#) do not apply:

- (1) To the rental of a housing accommodation in a building which contains housing accommodations for not more than two (2) families living independently of each other, if the lessor or a member of his or her family resides in one (1) of the housing accommodations; or
- (2) To the rental of a room or rooms in a single dwelling unit by an individual if he or she or a member of his or her family resides therein.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68)

Sec. 9.366. Discriminatory Financial Practices.

It shall be unlawful for a person to whom application is made for financial assistance in connection with a real estate transaction or for the construction, rehabilitation, repair, maintenance or improvement of real property, or a representative of such a person:

- (1) To discriminate against the applicant because of race, color, religion or national origin, age, sex, marital status, familial status, handicapped status, source of lawful income, or public assistance recipient status.
- (2) To use a form of application for financial assistance or to make or keep a record or inquiry in connection with applications for financial assistance which indicates, directly or indirectly, an intent to make a limitation, specification or discrimination as to race, color, religion, or national origin.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68; Ord. No. 75-103, 12-23-75; Ord. No. 89-23, § 5, 3-28-89; Ord. No. 2000-40, § 5, 7-11-00)

Sec. 9.367. Blockbusting.

It shall be unlawful for a person, for the purpose of inducing a real estate transaction from which he or she may benefit financially:

- (1) To represent that a change has occurred or will or may occur in the composition with respect to race, color, religion or national origin of the owners or occupants in the block, neighborhood or area in which the real property is located; or
- (2) To represent that this change will or may result in the lowering of property values, an increase in criminal or antisocial behavior, or a decline in the quality of schools in the block, neighborhood or area in which the real property is located.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68; Ord. No. 89-23, § 6, 3-28-89)

Sec. 9.368. Religious Institutions.

It shall not be unlawful for a religious institution or organization or a charitable or educational organization operated, supervised or controlled by a religious institution or organization to give preference to members of the same religion in a real property transaction when the property is to be used for religious, charitable or educational purposes.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68)

Sec. 9.369. Elderly Housing.

It shall not be unlawful for a property owner to give preference to elderly persons in the rental of housing accommodation(s) when the proposed rental accommodation(s) is located in a building which contains housing accommodations for more than one (1) family and all rental units will be occupied by elderly persons.

(Ord. No. 89-23, § 7, 3-28-89)

Sec. 9.370. False or Misleading Statements Prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to knowingly or intentionally present false or misleading statements to the authorities charged with the enforcement of this Chapter or to sign a complaint for violation of this Chapter, based upon false or misleading information.

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68; Ord. No. 89-23, § 8, 3-28-89)

Sec. 9.371. Period of Limitations.

Complaints of this Chapter shall be in writing to the City Attorney not later than one hundred eighty (180) days after the commission of the offense(s).

(Ord. No. 68-3, 1-2-68; Ord. No. 89-23, § 9, 3-28-89; Ord. No. 2012-58, § 1, 11-13-12)

Secs. 9.372—9.375. Reserved.

FOOTNOTE(S):

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Cross reference— *Property Maintenance Code, Ch. 140.* [\(Back\)](#)

State Law reference— *See Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act, MCL 37.2501 et seq.* [\(Back\)](#)