



## **WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY FAIR HOUSING POLICY**

### **1) Purpose/Vision**

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act establishes federal policy for providing fair housing throughout the United States. The intent of Title VIII is to ensure equal housing opportunities for all citizens. Furthermore, the Washington County Community Development Agency (“the Agency”), as a recipient of federal community development funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, is obligated to certify that it will affirmatively further fair housing. The Agency is committed to meeting this obligation and has developed this Fair Housing Policy to further that goal.

### **2) Fair Housing Policy Statement**

It is the policy and commitment of the Agency to ensure that fair and equal housing opportunities are granted to all persons in all housing opportunities and development activities funded by the Agency regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistances, familial status, national origin, or disability. This shall be done through external policies that provide meaningful access to all constituents and fair housing informational and referral services; and internal practices and procedures that do not discriminate and that affirmatively further fair housing.

### **3) External Practices**

#### Meaningful Access

- **Online Information.** The Agency will have information about fair housing prominently displayed on the Agency’s website. The website page will provide a link to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights. The webpage will also have links to various fair housing resources, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, and others.

- **In-Person Information.** The Agency will provide fair housing information to anyone requesting such information at the Agency offices. Agency staff will provide information of the online web page for fair housing resources.
- **Languages.** The Agency is committed to providing information in the native language of its residents. Therefore, if the Agency's website translation tool does not provide translation in a native language, then the Agency will direct individuals to appropriate translation services that are available.

#### **4) Internal Practices**

The Agency commits to the following steps to promote awareness and sensitivity to fair housing issues in all of its government functions.

- **Staff Training -** The Agency will continue to train its staff and officials on fair housing considerations.
- **Housing Analysis -** The Agency will review its housing inventory periodically to examine the affordability of both rental and owner-occupied housing to inform future Agency actions.
- **Program and Policy Analysis –** The Agency will review its policies and procedures of housing assistance, housing finance, economic development, and other services periodically to identify any potential for disparate impact or treatment.
- **Project Planning and Analysis -** The Agency planning functions, and development review will consider housing issues, including whether potential projects may perpetuate segregation or lead to displacement of protected classes.
- **Community Engagement -** The Agency will seek input from under-represented populations in the community utilizing engagement best practices, including outreach to local groups regarding fair housing, housing assistance policies, utilization of community development resources, and development that may be undertaken by the Agency.
- **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing -** As a recipient of federal funds, the Agency agrees to participate in the Regional Analysis of Impediments, as organized by the regional Fair Housing Implementation

Council. The Agency will consider integrating the recommendations and action plan into Agency planning documents, including the Consolidated Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other applicable documents.