

FAIR HOUSING ADVOCATE



The Fair Housing Center Remains Committed to Fighting Against Housing Discrimination For All

We are pleased to report that we received two funding opportunities in the first quarter of 2026 through the U.S. Department of Housing and **Urban Development's (HUD) Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP)**. We were awarded funding through both the Private Enforcement Initiative (PEI), which supports complaint investigations and fair housing testing, and the Education and Outreach Initiative (EOI), which helps educate the public and housing providers about fair housing rights and responsibilities. These awards will allow us to continue advancing fair housing and combating housing discrimination in our communities.

Fair Housing Month Awareness & Initiatives

Each April, in recognition of the landmark Fair Housing Act of 1968, The Fair Housing Center celebrates **Fair Housing Month** through a series of community events and initiatives. This year, we kicked off the month with a **Community Breakfast** at the ProMedica Ebeid Center on April 2, partnered with the University of Toledo Student Bar Association for **Strike Out Discrimination** at Miracle Lanes on April 12, hosted our annual **Ode to the Zip Code Poetry Contest** at the Main Library on April 18, and concluded the month by honoring local fair housing advocates at our **Homes & Dreams Fundraiser** at the Toledo Club on April 30.



SBA students helped raise funds and awareness for TFHC at Strike Out Discrimination.



Congrats to Our 2026 Ode to the Zip Code Winners!

The **11th Annual Ode to the ZIP Code Poetry Contest** brought poets of all ages together at the Main Library on April 18 to share work inspired by home, identity, and community. Congratulations to our 2026 winners: **Kimberly Murphy, Arianna Watkins, and Jody Bruce** (Adult); **Sophia Maeve Ploeger, Jack Rosebrock, and ShayNa Fonesca** (Young Adult); and **Ty Watts, Lenna Sasikirana, and Kylie Stout** (Youth). Thank you to everyone who attended and supported this special event. Read more in the [Toledo City Paper](#).

Honoring Fair Housing Champions at Homes & Dreams



The Fair Housing Center’s **Homes & Dreams Fundraiser** on April 30 at the Toledo Club was an inspiring evening celebrating more than 50 years of advancing fair and inclusive housing. Guests enjoyed an evening of music, community, and recognition of local fair housing advocates **Rosalyn Clemens**, **Kimberly Dixon**, **Sean Nestor**, and **Reginald Temple** for their lasting impact on housing equity in our region. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the event raised more than \$20,000 to support TFHC’s mission. Special thanks to this year’s sponsors: Lucas County Commissioners, SSOE Group, Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, and Key Realty Foundation.

Educational Trainings & Workshops

This spring, The Fair Housing Center continued its commitment to educating the community on fair housing issues through a series of impactful trainings and discussions.

On April 14, more than 50 participants joined our **Redlining Workshop** at the Lucas County EMS Training Center, where CEO George Thomas explored the lasting effects of historic redlining practices and their continued impact on housing inequities today.

On May 13, TFHC hosted **“Fair Housing Basics and Beyond”** for **real estate professionals** from Howard Hanna of Northwest Ohio at the ProMedica Ebeid Center. Led by Christina Rodriguez and George Thomas, the interactive training covered the history of fair housing law, discriminatory practices, and best practices for compliance across the housing industry. Thank you to all who attended and engaged in these important conversations about creating more inclusive communities.

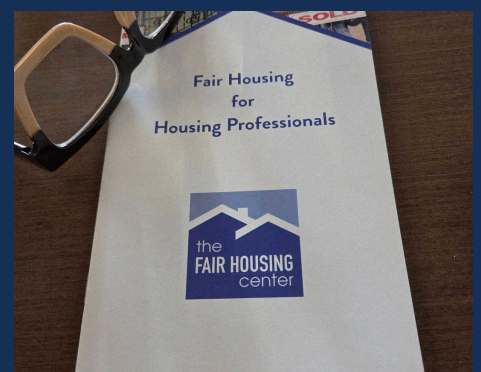


Top Left: Community members and social services workers spent an afternoon learning about the harmful effects of redlining in Toledo on April 14.



Bottom Left: Real estate agents from Howard Hanna participated in a Continuing Education training with TFHC on May 13.

Bottom Right: Free trainings and resources for housing professionals are available. Contact us today!



[Download Brochure](#)

Noteworthy Pending Cases

OCRC Lawsuit

The Fair Housing Center has filed suit against the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC). When an Ohioan files a charge alleging housing discrimination with OCRC, it must take certain steps to investigate the charge and then reach a decision as to whether, based on its investigation, it believes discrimination may have occurred. But in a recent case, OCRC refused to follow the law and instead it "administratively dismissed" a housing discrimination charge. The Fair Housing Center **filed a mandamus action in the 10th District Court of Appeals** asking that the Court required OCRC to follow the law and confirm that OCRC must investigate complaints of housing discrimination.

Rent Escrow Appeal

The Fair Housing Center filed an appeal of a case involving rent escrow. In the case, the lower Court released a substantial portion of the rent to the landlord, even though the landlord never filed an application for release of the rent and the rental home was still in need of repairs. **The appeal seeks to confirm that the lower Court must follow the state Landlord-Tenant Act** and landlords must file an application for release of rent with proof that they have completed repairs and maintenance.

Receivership Action

The Fair Housing Center has **filed a receivership action to take control of a vacant nuisance property in the Old South End**. If the case is successful, a receiver will be appointed to maintain and improve the nuisance property. Then, if approved by the Court, the home can be sold to an end user to help a local resident become a homeowner. Pending a successful result, The Fair Housing Center plans to continue to pursue similar cases in historically redlined and disinvested neighborhoods.

TFHC In The News

The Fair Housing Center received some substantial news coverage this past quarter, both regionally and internationally. In February, The Guardian conducted a two-part series on how out-of-town property investors are negatively affecting Toledo's affordable housing market.

[‘My bill keeps escalating’: How Toledo, Ohio, became the epicenter of the US housing crisis](#)

[How ‘neglectful or absentee’ investors fuel Toledo, Ohio’s post-pandemic housing crisis](#)

The Fair Housing Center's CEO George Thomas made an appearance on the Four Hundred and Nineteen Podcast on April 16. George talked about the important role our organization plays in combating housing discrimination in Toledo and promoted our annual Ode to the Zip Code Contest reception.

[Watch the full episode here.](#)

Also in April, The Blade ran our Letter to the Editor discussing the Dorr Street corridor through a fair housing lens.

[Letter to the Editor: Consider Dorr Street’s impact to area](#)

The Guardian

