

KANSAS

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

2004

Executive Summary*

This section [report for the 2004-2008 Kansas Consolidated Plan] provides an examination of current impediments to fair housing in the State of Kansas. Data were compiled through surveys, focus groups, analyses of recent fair housing complaints, key person interviews and reviews of recent reports. Taken together, they lead to a number of conclusions:

- Most housing and service providers feel that a significant share of fair housing violations in the State go unreported.
- This unreporting is largely due to lack of knowledge about fair housing rights and how to file complaints. Fear of retribution and apathy were also cited as reasons for not reporting.
- Current violations are most likely to impact persons with disabilities and, in Southwest Kansas, large Hispanic families. Violations may include refusal to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities and refusal to rent on the basis of national origin or family size. Concentrated ownership of rental units in some parts of the state creates a dynamic where potential complainants are easily intimidated.
- Predatory lending was seen as a concern, particularly in the Northeast Region of the State. The most common forms of predatory lending were reported to be lenders making unaffordable loans and repeated inducements for refinancing so that lenders could earn points on transactions.

Given these findings, the State's fair housing activities should emphasize publicity and information, while making sure that venues remain in place for enforcement. Some public forum attendees emphasized enforcement, under the theory that high profile enforcement is the best publicity activity. Fair housing activities should also focus on ensuring that resources are available to allow for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, and that bilingual materials are readily available in Southwest Kansas.

*Source: BBC Research & Consulting