

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2022

Contact:

Alex Staropoli, (914) 469-0060, alexstaropoli@fairsharehousing.org

FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER APPLAUDS DIVISION ON CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT OF THE FAIR CHANCE IN HOUSING ACT TO PROTECT RETURNING CITIZENS FROM HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Earlier today, the Office of the Attorney General announced that the Division on Civil Rights sent cease-and-desist letters to seven housing providers whose advertisements appear to unlawfully discriminate against applicants based on their prior involvement with the criminal legal system in violation of the Fair Chance in Housing Act that was passed last year. In response to this announcement Fair Share Housing Center issued the following statement.

Adam Gordon, Executive Director, Fair Share Housing Center:

"Today's announcement by the Office of the Attorney General sends a clear message to housing providers throughout New Jersey that discrimination against individuals with prior criminal legal system involvement will not be tolerated. The Fair Chance in Housing Act purposely included a strong enforcement mechanism because we know that enforcement is critical to addressing housing discrimination in our state.

New Jersey leads the nation in racial disparities across almost all indicators of health and well-being. The criminal legal system is no exception, with persons of color making up 60% of New Jersey's incarcerated population—a 171 percent overrepresentation. The consequences associated with a criminal record go far beyond serving a sentence. Securing safe, healthy, and affordable housing is often the biggest challenge individuals face when they are released from jail or prison.

New Jersey's Fair Chance in Housing Act is a national model for protecting individuals with prior involvement in the criminal legal system from housing discrimination. Enforcement makes this law a reality and Fair Share Housing Center is committed to working with the Division on Civil Rights to make sure all New Jerseyans are protected from housing discrimination. Our hope is that with continued education and outreach this legislation can begin to transform access to housing in New Jersey."

###

Fair Share Housing Center is a nonprofit advocacy organization that uses litigation and policy strategies to dismantle decades of racial and economic discrimination in New Jersey and nationally that excludes people from the opportunity to live in safe, healthy, and affordable housing.