



FAIR HOUSING LAWSUIT ALLEGING DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION FILED AGAINST INDIANAPOLIS PROPERTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michelle Wickham
Phone: 317-503-3810
Email: ipasnews@ipas.in.gov

February 8, 2016

INDIANAPOLIS – Today, the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI), Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (IPAS), and an Indianapolis family announce the filing of a federal lawsuit against the Grandville Cooperative, Inc. and Kirkpatrick Management Co. Inc. of Indianapolis, Indiana. The complaint alleges that the defendants refused to rent to a family that included a person with disabilities stating that “...it will be a liability to offer [the person with a disability] a unit that is not accommodating to everyone in the household.”

“Disability has been a federally protected class since 1988, but we still see examples of housing discrimination daily,” said Amy Nelson, Executive Director of the FHCCI. “Persons with disabilities must have housing options available to them similar to those without disabilities, including access to housing of their choice.”

After receiving contact from the family expressing their concerns about their rights, the FHCCI conducted an investigation and found evidence of discrimination due to disability in violation of fair housing laws.

“This case outlines Kirkpatrick’s blatant disregard for the law and it is a clear violation of the Fair Housing Act. An established management company of this size should be knowledgeable and in compliance with the law,” said Dawn Adams, Executive Director of IPAS. “All people with disabilities have the right to choose where they want to live and Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services will continue to protect this right.”

Under federal and state fair housing laws, it is unlawful to discriminate in housing related transactions solely due to someone’s race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or presence of children in the home. The actions of Grandville Cooperative management are alleged to violate fair housing laws which make it is unlawful for a management company or

owner to deny a person with a disability an opportunity to live in its community because of that person's disability. Moreover, it is unlawful to deny a person with a disability a reasonable modification of existing premises occupied or to be occupied by such person if such modification may be necessary to afford that person full enjoyment of the premises.

The case has been filed in the US District Court, Southern District of Indiana. The Plaintiffs are represented by Thomas E. Crishon and Melissa L. Keyes, of the Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services and Christopher Brancart and Thomas Kayes of Brancart & Brancart.

A copy of the filed complaint can be found on the IPAS website here.

###

The mission of Indiana Protection & Advocacy Services is to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities through empowerment and advocacy. For more information, visit: <http://www.in.gov/ipas/>