

**GREATER BALTIMORE  
COMMUNITY HOUSING RESOURCE BOARD**

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For immediate release

**April is National Fair Month.**

National Fair Housing Month celebrates the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, and familial status in the sale or rental of housing. Titles VIII and XIX of the Act are known as the Fair Housing Act (of 1968). This was a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Act of 1866. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 legally ended the application of "Jim Crow" laws, which had been upheld by the Supreme Court in the 1896 case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, in which the Court held that racial segregation that was "separate but equal" was constitutional. The 1968 Act was subsequently amended and revised by legislation in 1974, 1988, and by HUD's [February 11, 2021 announcement](#) that it would enforce discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

When the [Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson utilized this national tragedy to urge the bill's speedy Congressional approval. Since the 1966 open housing marches in Chicago, Dr. King's name had been closely associated with the Fair Housing legislation. President Johnson viewed the Act as a fitting memorial to the man's life work, and wished to have the Act passed prior to Dr. King's funeral in Atlanta. To aid community development and enforce the Fair Housing Law, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was created in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

HUD initially held a gala event marking the first year of the Act's passage. The tradition of celebrating Fair Housing Month has grown much larger. Governors began to issue proclamations that designated April as "Fair Housing Month," and schools across the country sponsored poster and essay contests that focused upon fair housing issues. Regional winners from these contests appeared in HUD events with their Congressional representatives. HUD partners with the National Association of

Homebuilders, National Association of Realtors, and the American Advertising Council. Every HUD administrative region across the country also has its own celebrations, meetings, dinners, contests and radio-television shows that featured HUD, state and private fair housing experts and officials.

In Maryland, Fair Housing Month also celebrates the passage of Article 49-B of the Annotated Code of Maryland prohibiting discrimination in the sale or rental of housing. The Governor traditionally issues a Proclamation declaring April as Fair Housing Month in the State, and various celebrations are held. The HUD Baltimore Office, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, several governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private groups - including the GBCHRB - hold various events and webinars. For example, [the 2021 Fair Housing Month Exhibition Student Artwork Call for Entry](#) was held in 2021 for elementary, middle, and high school students in Baltimore, followed by an exhibition from April 1 through May 1, 2021 at the dynamic curated outdoor art event in the Parks and People Foundation location at 2100 Liberty Heights Avenue, Baltimore. Everyone is invited to attend these free events.

### ***For More Information***

[Baltimore City Office of Equity & Civil Rights Fair Housing Month Film Festival](#). For any questions, contact Lauren Jackson at <mailto:Lauren.Jackson@BaltimoreCity.gov>.

National Fair Housing Alliance, ["Seven Days - History of the Fair Housing Act"](#).

Maryland Center for History and Culture, ["A History of Housing Discrimination & Redlining in Baltimore,"](#) short film.

[A Short History of National Fair Housing Month](#).

[US Department of HUD](#) - The Department's main website.

[HUD Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity National Office](#) - For information about Fair Housing and Fair Housing Month, among other equity subjects.

[2021 HUD Fair Housing Month 2021 Outreach Materials](#) - A variety of materials free to download including posters, guides, PSAs, and others.