

## **FAIR HOUSING ACTION PLAN**

### **I. POLICY STATEMENT**

It shall be the policy and commitment of the Town of Mansfield, Connecticut to ensure that fair and equal housing opportunities are granted to all persons, in all housing opportunities and development activities funded by the town, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, lawful source of income, familial status, national origin, ancestry, age or mental or physical disability. This shall be done through a program of education, an analysis of impediments, and designation of a Fair Housing Officer and development of a procedure for complaints of discrimination. This plan will incorporate the directives of state and federal laws and executive orders, including, but not limited to:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Fair Housing Act – Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended
- Executive Order 11063, as amended by Executive Order 12259
- Section 104(b) of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended
- Section 109 of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended
- Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended
- Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended
- Executive Order 11246 (as amended by Executive Orders 12375 and 12086)
- Equal Opportunity under HUD contracts and HUD-assisted Construction Contracts
- Executive Order 12892, Leadership and Coordination of Fair Housing
- Connecticut General Statutes 46a-64c as amended

The Town of Mansfield commits to providing and promoting racial and economic integration in any housing development financially supported with DOH funding and will take affirmative steps to reach beneficiaries from all racial and ethnic groups as well as the physically or mentally handicapped and families with children and to reach a broad range of income eligible beneficiaries for appropriate and applicable housing opportunities.

### **II. SELECTION OF FAIR HOUSING OFFICER**

In accordance with Title VIII, Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended, the Fair Housing Officer below has been designated to handle fair housing complaints and activities:

**Patricia Schneider**  
**Director of Human Services**  
Human Services Office ▪ 303 Maple Road  
Mansfield, CT 06268  
860-429-3315

The Fair Housing Officer is responsible for the intake and processing of all housing complaints as well as implementation of the Fair Housing Plan activities and actions. While not expected to be an "expert" in Fair Housing Laws, at a minimum, the officer will be familiar with the complaint process and federal and state laws, which address Fair Housing. Records which show the date, time, nature of complaint and decisions made in the complaint process will be fully documented.

A separate file will maintain a record of all housing discrimination complaints and follow-up actions.

### **III. COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Housing discrimination complaint forms such as Forms HUD-903 and HUD-903A (Spanish version) from HUD, as well as, a summary of actions which may constitute housing discrimination, and instructions for completing and filing housing discrimination complaints will be made available to citizens at the Human Services Office, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield, Connecticut. Complaints need not be made on official forms to be valid.

Forms will also be distributed to lenders, realtors, and at other public places such as the Town Hall and Library periodically.

The Fair Housing Officer will reasonably assist the complainant in submitting the complaint to the appropriate body by providing assistance in explaining the form and/or contacting the appropriate office and allowing the use of town phones for communication.

The individual(s) filing the complaint will then be advised of the option of filing directly with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) within one year after an alleged violation, the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) by filing a notarized complaint within 180 days of the alleged violation, or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or with all agencies simultaneously. The individual should also be advised of the option of filing suit, at his/her expense in Federal District Court or State Court within two years of an alleged violation. The individual should be further advised that if he/she cannot afford an attorney, the Court may appoint one and that a suit may be commenced even after filing a complaint, if the individual has not signed a conciliation agreement and an Administrative Law Judge has not started a hearing.

A court may award actual and punitive damages and attorney's fees and costs.

The Fair Housing Officer will keep a record of the progress on the number of complaints filed, actions taken, and the status of each complaint. No complaints have been filed in the last three years.

### **IV. OPPORTUNITY MAPPING**

Using the Connecticut Opportunity Map, which is available at the DOH website, the Town has determined that the target area for the proposed project or activity is a high and very high opportunity area.

### **V. IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION STEPS**

The Town will take specific action steps and implementation activities over the next three-year period following the guidelines provided by DOH.

**Encourage the creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing in a variety of locations**

1. Identify developable land within the municipality for developers of affordable housing. (Director of Planning and Development)

**Encourage the collection and analysis of data to determine if the municipality is meeting its goals to affirmatively further fair housing**

3. Report municipal and regional racial and ethnic composition data in municipal POCDs. (Director of Planning and Development)

**Ensure local planning documents affirmatively further fair housing**

4. Publish the municipality's POCD on its website. (Director of Planning and Development)

**Convene stakeholders to review proposed legislative solutions to existing impediments to fair housing choice**

5. Review occupancy ordinances, regulations and/or guidelines to ensure that the rules are not unnecessarily restrictive for families with children. At a minimum, they should be in line with reasonable local fire and building codes. (Director of Planning and Development, Planning and Zoning Commission)
7. Review zoning ordinances to determine if they require special permits for affordable housing or require large lot sizes, low density requirements, or other policies that would make the development of affordable housing expensive and propose changes to such requirements. (Director of Planning and Development, Planning and Zoning Commission)
8. If the municipality's zoning ordinance does not include a statement that people with disabilities have the right to request a reasonable accommodation of a change in any zoning ordinance, add this to the existing zoning ordinances. (Director of Planning and Development, Planning and Zoning Commission)

**Promote fair housing enforcement and education**

11. Appoint a fair housing officer, have him or her trained on their duties and responsibilities as a fair housing officer, and publicize the person's name, contact information, and job responsibilities. (Town Manager, Director of Human Services)

**Additional Steps**

- The Town of Mansfield will adopt annually a Fair Housing Policy Statement and a Fair Housing Resolution as an indication of its commitment to Fair Housing Month during the month of April. (Town Council)
- The Town of Mansfield will display its fair housing policies/procedures and ADA policies and grievance procedure on its website. (Director of Human Services)
- The Town of Mansfield will display Fair Housing posters identifying the town's Fair Housing Officer, title, address and phone number in prominent locations. In addition, fair housing information will be distributed outside of traditional municipal locations including local realtors and banks. (Director of Human Services)
- All advertising of residential real estate owned by the Town of Mansfield for sale, rent or financing will contain the Fair Housing logo, equal opportunity slogan as a means of educating the home seeking public that the property is available to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, national origin, age, ancestry, or lawful source of income. (Town Manager)

- All bid advertisements by Town-sponsored programs must include the phrase "Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer." The type of logo, statement or slogan will depend on the type of media being used (visual or auditory). All logos/statements must appear at the end of the advertisement. (Town Manager/Finance Director)

## VI. ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS

The town will cooperate and assist the state with its periodic Analysis of Impediments and conduct a review of policies, practices and procedures that affect the availability and accessibility of housing.

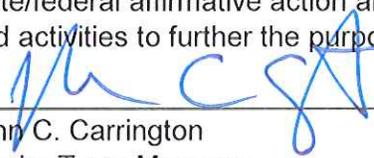
## VII. TIMETABLE

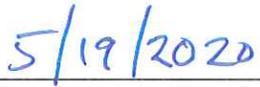
The following target dates for completion have been identified for the actions identified in Section V of this Plan:

Action Number	Summary	Target Date
1	<b>Identify developable land for non-profit housing developers.</b> This task will be ongoing throughout the life of the plan as developers contact staff for guidance on potential locations based on the size and infrastructure needs of their project.	Ongoing
3	<b>Report municipal and regional racial and economic data in the Plan of Conservation and Development.</b> Municipal data is currently included in the appendix to the Plan; regional data will be added as part of a planned update related to Section 8-30j, C.G.S. requirements for establishing/updating an affordable housing plan for the Town.	2021
4	<b>Publish the POCD on the Town's Website.</b> The Plan is currently published on the website ( <a href="http://www.mansfieldct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2558/-Plan-of-Conservation-and-Development?bidId=">http://www.mansfieldct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2558/-Plan-of-Conservation-and-Development?bidId=</a> ) and the anticipated update referenced under Action 3 will also be published on the Website.	2021
5	<b>Review Occupancy Regulations to ensure they are not overly restrictive for families.</b> The current definition of Family includes "functional families" to provide flexibility for non-traditional families. Other occupancy regulations will be reviewed as part of the Town's overall Zoning Rewrite Project.	2021
7	<b>Propose Changes to Zoning Regulations to reduce barriers to affordable housing.</b> Lot size requirements and review procedures for affordable housing developments will be reviewed as part of the Town's overall Zoning Rewrite Project.	2021
8	<b>Propose Changes to Zoning Regulations to address reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.</b> Revisions related to providing accommodations for persons with disabilities will be reviewed as part of the Town's overall Zoning Rewrite Project.	2021
11	<b>Appoint a Fair Housing Officer.</b> The Town has had a Fair Housing Officer for many years. Should the current Fair Housing Officer retire or should the responsibilities be transferred to another individual, training of that individual and publication of their contact information will occur.	Ongoing

**VIII. AMENDMENTS**

The Town Manager shall amend and revise this Plan as required to keep current with state/federal affirmative action and equal opportunity policies and procedures and local actions and activities to further the purposes of this Plan.

  
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John C. Carrington  
Interim Town Manager

  
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Date