



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 22-1474A, Version: 1

Subject:

Proposed initiation of litigation in the case of Doyle Mann v. Seminole Square Apartment III Association, Inc. et al.; HUD Case No. 04-22-1242-8; PC Case No. 22-038 - alleged housing discrimination.

Recommended Action:

Approval and authorization for the County Attorney to initiate litigation on behalf of Doyle Mann through outside counsel retained for these legal services.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Summary:

On May 6, 2022, Complainant Doyle Mann filed a housing discrimination charge with the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights (PCOHR), alleging Complainant was subject to unlawful housing discrimination, specifically in the refusal to sell/rent, failure to permit reasonable modification, and failure to make a reasonable accommodation on the basis of disability under the Fair Housing Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. §3601, et seq.). Complainant applied for and was informed he was approved to rent one of Respondents' units. However, after meeting with Respondents to discuss accessibility, modifications, and accommodations, Complainant concluded that Respondents would not accommodate all the requirements he needed to access his unit. While Respondents did authorize the modification of adding a ramp for Complainant; Respondents still failed to make a reasonable accommodation by denying the request for two parking spaces which Complainant required for side entry into his disability van. As Complainant is confined to a wheelchair, this accommodation denial also denied him the opportunity to rent the dwelling for which he was approved. Following the investigation, on July 22, 2022, PCOHR issued a finding of reasonable cause that Doyle Mann was subject to a denial of reasonable accommodation and refusal to rent in violation of Chapter 70 of the Pinellas County Code and the Fair Housing Act, as amended. Attempts to conciliate the matter were unsuccessful.

In accordance with Sections 70-146 and 70-147 of the Pinellas County Code, the County Attorney's Office is required to file a civil action on behalf of an aggrieved party seeking appropriate relief, and if a timely election is not made, to have the charge decided in a civil action.

Background Information:

The Determination issued by the PCOHR setting forth the facts and applicable law that led to the reasonable cause determination is attached, as well as the Final Investigative Report.

Fiscal Impact:

Unknown.

Staff Member Responsible:

Jewel White, County Attorney
Keiah L. Townsend, Assistant County Attorney

Partners:

Office of Human Rights

Attachments:

Determination dated July 22, 2022.
Final Investigative Report dated July 20, 2022.