

Two Housing Discrimination Cases Filed at HUD

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For further information contact: Arthur Haywood, Esq. 215-849-719

September 15, 2004. Haywood LLC has recently filed disability and race housing discrimination complaints with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in July and August 2004 on behalf of victims of discrimination. In each of these cases families that sought to improve their living conditions were met with exclusionary practices.

The first case is Bernice and Arnell Bryant v. William Phillips where Phillips threatened and harassed the Bryants to force them out of the all white neighborhood. The Bryants, African American older adults, moved to a low crime and affordable housing area in Folsom, PA in February 2004. Phillips, a neighbor, screamed "nigger" and "whores" at the Bryants around 4 am in June. Then Phillips attempted to break into their apartment with a barking dog to force them out.

The Bryants feared for their lives during the assault. Phillips was arrested by the local police and is subject to criminal prosecution as well as damages for housing discrimination. The Bryants seek money damages for the severe emotional distressed caused by the violent attempt to force them out of their residence and out of the attractive neighborhood.

The second case is Carolyn Whitsett v. Nwogh Remigius where Remigius refused to rent to Ms. Whitsett because of a disability. Ms. Whitsett desired to move to a home for rent to increase the living space for her family. Remigius was ready and willing to rent to Ms. Whitsett until he became aware of her disability.

Ms. Whitsett was insulted, frustrated and humiliated by this rejection. Her family was denied access to improved living conditions in a low crime area. She seeks money damages for the emotional distressed caused by the discrimination.

Each of these victims had their chances for affordable housing in low crime areas restricted by illegally discrimination. Remedies for exclusionary practices may be limited to money damages that cannot fully compensate for the emotional and economic harm caused by the efforts to keep them out of desirable neighborhoods and housing.