

8. What if I can't find any information about the AFH process where I live?

If you can't find information about the AFH from your local housing and community development department or housing authority, you can contact your nearest HUD office.

Contact information for local HUD offices can be found at HUD.gov, under the "Contact Us" menu.

9. I found out that my city is working with other cities to submit a combined AFH. What does that mean?

Localities and housing authorities have the option of participating in a combined AFH. This means, for example, your city may work with your county as well as your local housing authority to submit an AFH.

However, each participant in the larger AFH (e.g., your city or housing authority) is still responsible for meeting all of the AFH requirements.

Any combined AFH will have a lead entity responsible for coordinating the AFH submission. The lead entity will be able to provide information about getting involved with the process.

10. How can I get involved in the AFH process?

Some ways to get involved include —

- Working with other residents, community advocates, and other stakeholders

to provide input about goals the community would like to see in the final AFH;

- Taking any surveys about the AFH distributed by the locality;
- Attending public meetings, focus groups, and hearings about the AFH;
- Ensuring that meetings, hearings, and focus groups are accessible to non-English speakers and persons with disabilities;
- Writing a letter or speaking at a meeting or hearing with your input. Such input could be as simple as "We need a law protecting Section 8 voucher holders from discrimination in our county."

No matter how you get involved, the idea is to share your experiences with housing and access to opportunity in your community to influence how the AFH turns out.

More questions?

Contact your local legal services or fair housing agency:

[Insert Logo and Contact Info here]

This pamphlet is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If you believe you have experienced housing discrimination, please contact a local attorney or the nearest fair housing organization to discuss your options.



Opportunity and Your Community:

The Assessment of Fair Housing



Do you or your neighbors have a hard time accessing quality affordable housing close to:

- ✓ High-performing schools?
- ✓ Transit?
- ✓ Jobs?
- ✓ A healthy living environment?

If you answered YES, your community needs your input!

August 2017

Looking at Opportunity in Your Community: The Assessment of Fair Housing

1. What is the Assessment of Fair Housing?

The Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) is a planning process that requires certain cities/towns/counties (localities) as well as housing authorities to examine the relationship between where people live and their ability to access jobs, high-performing schools, affordable housing, and public transit.

2. Who has to participate in the planning process?

As a condition of receiving certain federal funds, many localities, as well as housing authorities, must complete and submit the AFH to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for review.

These localities and housing authorities have a responsibility under federal law to combat the impact of laws and policies that have long discriminated against communities of color, persons with disabilities, families with children, and others have been denied equal access to housing.

3. Is this process just about housing?

No. The AFH process examines people's barriers to accessing good housing, such as high housing costs, as well as ability to access jobs, high-performing schools, transit, and healthy communities based on where they live.

4. What do localities and housing authorities have to do?

To complete their AFH, localities and housing authorities must:

- Complete questions using available data and information, including public input;
- Identify factors that are contributing to housing discrimination, like zoning laws;
- Set goals to overcome factors contributing to housing discrimination; and
- Submit the AFH to HUD for review.

During the process, localities and housing authorities must provide the public with opportunities to provide input, including holding at least one public hearing, making the draft AFH publicly available for review, and accepting public comments.

5. How does the process affect me or my community?

The AFH will be key in identifying barriers to housing access and opportunity in communities — such as discrimination by landlords or lack of government investment. Localities and housing authorities must set goals to address and overcome these barriers.

The AFH process can affect future funding and policy decisions impacting your community. For example, the AFH can influence decisions about where affordable housing is being built, or whether local laws should be changed to protect certain people from housing discrimination (e.g. Section 8 Voucher holders).

6. What difference can I make by getting involved?

Providing information about what's working and what isn't in your community helps identify where changes need to be made, and where good policies or practices should continue.

Localities and housing authorities must consider information they receive from the public process. This includes information they get from individual resident letters or when residents speak at a public meeting about the AFH.

If your input is not adopted, localities and housing authorities have to explain why that decision was made in the final AFH.

7. How do I find out if my city or town must participate in the process?

Not every city, town, or county must submit an AFH.

The easiest way to find out if your city, town, or county has to complete an AFH is to contact your local department in charge of housing and community development and ask if the agency has to complete a "Consolidated Plan." If so, then the city, town, or county is required to complete an AFH at least once every five years.

If not, states have to also complete an AFH, meaning that you can provide input about your locality during the state AFH process.

All housing authorities that receive funding for public housing or the Section 8 program must complete an AFH.