

McKean County Association of Realtors
30 Fraley Street
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April 6, 2020

April Marks Fair Housing Month

MCKEAN COUNTY – Every April, Realtors® reaffirm their continued commitment to fair and equitable treatment for everyone in search of a home. The federal Fair Housing Act recognizes that everyone should have the right to choose where they want to live and makes it illegal to discriminate in housing-related transactions based on seven protected classes: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability and familial status. The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act protects against housing discrimination in the commonwealth and includes two additional protected classes: age (over 40) and users and handlers or trainers of assistance animals for persons with disabilities.

“One of the traits that makes Realtors® different from other real estate agents is the National Association of Realtors® Code of Ethics,” said McKean County Association President Kathy Obermeyer. “As Realtors®, we agree to follow the Code of Ethics, which outlines how we fairly and equally treat our clients.”

Understanding the rights afforded to everyone is important going through the homebuying process. Discrimination can occur with mortgage lenders and homeowner’s insurance when they treat someone different because of their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability or because they have children in their family. Homeowners insurance “redlining” is also a form of discrimination. It occurs when the homeowner is treated differently because of their race or national origin of the residents in the neighborhood where their home is located.

“To ensure you’re receiving fair treatment, seek prices and products from multiple companies,” said Obermeyer. “You’ll have several options and may end up saving money. Ask your friends, research companies online or call a housing counseling agency for a list of companies to talk with.”

“In the end, buying and selling a home are one of the most significant events in a person’s lifetime,” she added. “Owning a home helps build wealth and gives people a place to call ‘home.’ As Realtors®, we’re dedicated to helping people achieve their dream of owning a home.”

If consumers believe they have experienced a fair housing issue, they should contact the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission at phrc.pa.gov.