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## MHP Rental News

*A Quarterly Publication for Our Clients*

### Congratulations Liz!

We are proud to announce that Liz Ishimitsu, Property Manager of Marie Hansen Properties, is the new 2012 NARPM (National Association of Residential Property Managers) Oahu Chapter President! NARPM Oahu is the largest Chapter in the United States serving 203 members.

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### Fair Housing and the Rental Process

It is crucial, when renting a property, that property managers and owners avoid discrimination. There are many pitfalls, and it requires good policies, procedures, and practices, to prevent unwanted Fair Housing complaints.

Fair Housing actually began in the United States in 1776, with the Declaration of Independence, which states, "all men are created equal." Unfortunately, despite this solid foundation, discrimination existed, and, subsequently, it led to the enactment of many federal laws that directly affect rental housing. Some of these are the Civil Rights Act of 1866, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, and the 1990 American with Disabilities

### Spring 2012

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***The company with a Passion  
for Property Management!***

### Serving You

**Cheryl Kunimoto, President**  
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Act.

Based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or handicap, a landlord cannot:

- Refuse to rent
- Refuse to negotiate for housing
- Make housing unavailable
- Falsely deny a dwelling is available
- Set different terms, conditions, or privileges in the rental of the dwelling
- Refuse to rent to disabled persons
- Refuse to rent to disabled persons with assistance animals

It is also illegal to:

- Threaten, coerce, intimidate or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise such rights
- Advertise, or make any statement indicating a limitation, or preference, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or handicap

There are some states with additional Fair housing laws. An example of this is the Unruh and Rumford Acts in California that also prohibits discrimination based on a person's marital status, age, or sexual orientation.

It may first appear that property managers and owners may be required to rent anyone, but the law really does not convey this meaning. Landlords can select tenants using criteria based on consistent reasons, such as requiring good credit, minimum income, and good rental references from previous property managers and owners. The key is that these standards must apply equally to all applicants and tenants.

**How does our company avoid discrimination when renting your property?** We take many steps to handle this important issue and protect your investment.

- First, our advertising does not make any statement that indicates a preference, based on the group characteristics previously mentioned under paragraph three. For example, our rental ads do not contain certain wording such as "executive," indicating that only people of a higher income are allowed to apply. There are many similar words. The general rule is, "*describe*

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## Additional Services

**Thinking of buying or selling?** Just call and we will have an agent contact you to help with your Real Estate needs.

**Looking for management elsewhere?**

You, or someone you know, may need a property manager in other states.

Because of our proud affiliation with NARPM we have contacts throughout the country and may be able to assist you.

## Announcements

*the property, not the person."*

- Next, property showings are available to all interested parties. We do answer questions, when prospective tenants call regarding our vacancies. The answers could discourage them from wanting to see the property. However, the answers derive from the business requirements previously listed, the size of the property, the location, the list of amenities, or other non-discriminatory issues. The caller makes the determination and decision on whether they want to see the property, based on their individual needs.
- Offering different terms and conditions to different parties is one of the major offenses many landlords commit. Our company communicates the same terms and conditions, for renting the property, to all prospective applicants. If the terms change - everyone receives the same information.
- The rental application supports Fair Housing, and we issue the same documents and requirements to all prospective tenants. Upon receipt of each application, the processing procedure is the same for everyone. Acceptance or denial, once again, is the result of valid business requirements.

It is not always an easy task to avoid discrimination. The majority of today's tenants are aware of the Fair Housing laws and the procedures to file complaints. There are many organizations available to assist them. However, we work diligently to avoid unfair practices, and to prevent unwanted lawsuits or claims.

The real estate industry recognizes April as *Fair Housing Month*. This promotes professional articles and seminars to assist property managers and sales agents with their education on Fair Housing. At all times, our company policy is *"Every month is Fair Housing Month."*

### **Check Your Insurance.**

Events can happen - flood, extreme heat, earthquakes, fire, and more! It is important to check your insurance to obtain the best coverage possible and ensure that it is current. Review now with your insurance agent before a disaster/emergency occurs.

### **If An Emergency Occurs**

If an emergency situation occurs, please be patient and avoid tying up critical telephone lines and our time.

Our first priority during any emergency is to handle the situation, taking any necessary measures for the safety of your property and your tenants. Then we will contact you as soon as we are able.

## **Our Associations**



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