

# HOPE FORUM

97th Edition  
Spring 2024

A publication of Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc.

## HOPE Hosts 1st In-Person Fair Housing Month Event in Five Years



*Author Leah Rothstein speaks to the audience during the luncheon portion of "Fair Housing 2024," HOPE's Broward County Fair Housing Month event.*

On Friday, April 5, 2024, HOPE hosted a Fair Housing Month celebration, themed "Fair Housing 2024," at Le Méridien hotel in Dania Beach, FL. This Broward County workshop and luncheon was HOPE's 1st in-person Fair Housing Month event since April 2019. Dating back to the early 90s, HOPE hosted these annual in-person events, uninterrupted for decades.

HOPE has hosted online Fair Housing Month events for the past few years, but the return of having fair housing supporters connect and reconnect face-to-face was welcome. A number of speakers representing different fields of work in housing and justice offered their perspectives to an audience which itself also represented a diverse cross-section of community stakeholders.

Headlining the event was author Leah Rothstein, who delivered the keynote address at the luncheon. Ms. Rothstein is co-author of *Just Action* and an expert in the full range of housing policy stemming from more than two decades of experience as a consultant to affordable housing developers and local governments, in addition to her work as a community and union organizer. Ms. Rothstein responded to audience questions and stayed after the event to sign copies of her book, which were given to all event attendees.

HOPE appreciates all of the sponsors, partners, speakers, and attendees responsible for helping make the return of our in-person Fair Housing Month events a success!

Please turn to page 5 for more pictures from the event!

**Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc. fights housing discrimination to ensure your civil rights.**

We have a three-tiered strategy of (1) Education & Outreach, (2) Intake & Counseling, and (3) Private Enforcement. Thanks to federal, state and local funding, all of our services are **free to the public**. We are here to honor the legacy of the civil rights movement by striving for a truly just and equal society.

To become a tester or volunteer, please call (305) 651-4673 in Miami-Dade or (954) 567-0545 in Broward.

Thank you!

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Pg. 3: Discrimination against immigrants

Pg. 4: HUD resource on evictions & fair housing

Pg. 4: Hallandale Beach discrimination case

Pg. 6: HOPE's community outreach



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Please search for:

**HOPE Inc Fair Housing**

We're on X (formerly called Twitter)!  
Please find us and follow us at: **@hope\_fhc**



We're on Instagram!  
Please find us and follow us at: **@hope\_fhc**



Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence, Inc.

*HOPE Inc.'s mission is to fight housing discrimination in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties and to ensure equal housing opportunities throughout Florida.*

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**National origin  
discrimination  
in housing  
is illegal.**

**Call  
305-651-4673  
to report your  
experience.**



Florida SB264 restricts Chinese, Venezuelan, and Cuban people (and people of other targeted races, national origins, and ethnicities) from owning homes. The Fair Housing Act says it can't.

If you were denied the opportunity to buy or sell a home or discouraged from buying or selling because of race, national origin, or ethnicity, you may have experienced illegal housing discrimination. **Please call (305) 651-4673 to report your experience.**



# Thumbs Up! - Court Stops Enforcement of Florida Property Law that Targets Certain Immigrants

February 1, 2024 press release from the American Civil Liberties Union: The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals temporarily halted the enforcement of an unconstitutional Florida law, known as SB 264, against two Chinese immigrants who have challenged the statute in court. SB 264 bans many Chinese immigrants, including people here as professors, students, employees, and scientists, from buying a home in large swaths of the state. This decision comes after a Florida district court ruled against the plaintiffs' motion to preliminarily block the law while the case proceeded.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), ACLU of Florida, DeHeng Law Offices PC, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), and the law firm Quinn Emanuel are representing Chinese immigrants who live, work, study, and raise families in Florida, but would be prohibited under SB 264 from buying a home, as well as Multi-Choice Realty, a local real estate firm whose business has been harmed by the law.

"As a Chinese citizen who was in the process of buying a home when this law went into effect, I've been extremely worried ever since," said a plaintiff impacted by today's ruling. "Today's decision is a relief for me and my family, and we hope that the courts will permanently halt enforcement of this law."

The court of appeals unanimously held that the plaintiffs showed a substantial likelihood of prevailing in their arguments that SB 264 is preempted by federal law because Congress has already established a system of national security review of real estate purchases by foreign nationals. The court granted an injunction barring enforcement of the law against two of the plaintiffs while the court makes its decision on the merits of the appeal.

"There's no doubt that Florida's discriminatory housing law is unconstitutional," said Ashley Gorski, senior staff attorney at ACLU's National Security Project. "The court's decision brings two of our clients tremendous relief, and we will continue fighting to prevent this law from being enforced more broadly."

Under SB 264, people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents, and whose "domicile," or

permanent home, is in China, are prohibited from purchasing property in Florida altogether. The sole exception is incredibly narrow: People with non-tourist visas or who have been granted asylum may purchase one residential property under two acres that is not within five miles of any "military installation." This term is vaguely defined in the law, but there are at least 21 large military bases in Florida, many of them within five miles of cities like Orlando, Miami, and Tampa—putting many major residential and economically-important areas completely off-limits.

A similar but less restrictive rule also applies to many immigrants from Cuba, Venezuela, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and Syria. But the law singles out people from China for especially draconian restrictions and harsher criminal penalties.

"Florida's alien land law specifically targets Chinese individuals in clear violation of the Equal Protection Clause," said Bethany Li, legal director of AALDEF. "Today's ruling should serve as a warning to other states who are considering passing similarly racist bills, steeped in a history when Asians were ineligible for citizenship and were told they didn't belong. As a country, we should be making progress and passing laws that protect all communities rather than going back in time and reviving antiquated laws passed over a century ago."

Florida's pernicious new law recalls repeated efforts over the past century to weaponize false claims of "national security" against Asian and other immigrants. In the early 20th century, politicians used similar justifications to pass "alien land laws" in California and more than a dozen other states, prohibiting Chinese and Japanese immigrants from becoming landowners. Florida was one of the last states to repeal its "alien land law" in 2018.

"This Florida law is just like the alien land laws of more than a hundred years ago banning Asian Americans from owning land," said Clay Zhu, attorney and managing partner at DeHeng Law Offices PC. "It is unfair, unconstitutional, and un-American. We are encouraged by today's decision from the court."

# HUD: Evictions due to Discrimination are Illegal!

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has created a new resource on eviction and fair housing: “No Good Cause for Discrimination: Some Evictions Are Never Allowed,” a factsheet about situations where evictions violate civil rights laws and are not allowed. The information in the factsheet applies to almost all forms of housing, whether subsidized or in the private market.

This resource was mentioned in a March 2024 White House fact sheet on housing supply and lowering housing costs.

The HUD factsheet explains that landlords may not evict or threaten to evict someone:

- because of a tenant’s race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), national origin, disability, or familial status;
- because a tenant is pregnant or has children;
- because a tenant refused sexual advances;
- because a tenant reported a crime or an emergency;

- in retaliation for a tenant exercising rights under the Fair Housing Act;
- when the landlord could have made reasonable accommodations instead;
- if the eviction would have a discriminatory effect on a protected class and is not necessary.

This factsheet is written in accessible language and uses specific examples based on actual court cases and HUD charges of discrimination. It also contains detailed citations to the cases, settlements, and other materials that the factsheet relies on.

The factsheet is available through a Google search of: [hud no good eviction discrimination](#)

This factsheet is intended to be a resource for tenants, advocates, housing providers, and fair housing practitioners. The citations and examples may also be of help to attorneys and judges.

*~From Dustin Parks, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*

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## DOJ Settles Broward County Housing Discrimination Case based on Familial Status

On January 9, 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced that it had settled a case against Hallandale Beach’s Isle of Paradise for housing discrimination. The housing complex was charged with discriminating against families with children (familial status discrimination).

The housing complex of multiple buildings, all on the 400 block of Paradise Isle Boulevard in Hallandale Beach, was charged with violating the Fair Housing Act by having rules specifically aimed at children under 12. Instead of such rules, housing providers are encouraged to create rules that cover everybody equally and target behaviors instead of the people associated with such behaviors. So if a housing provider thinks that – for the sake of making this point – kids are noisy and damage things, that housing provider should make rules about the noise and damage, NOT about the kids. That way, everybody is being treated the same, and nobody nor groups of people are being targeted.

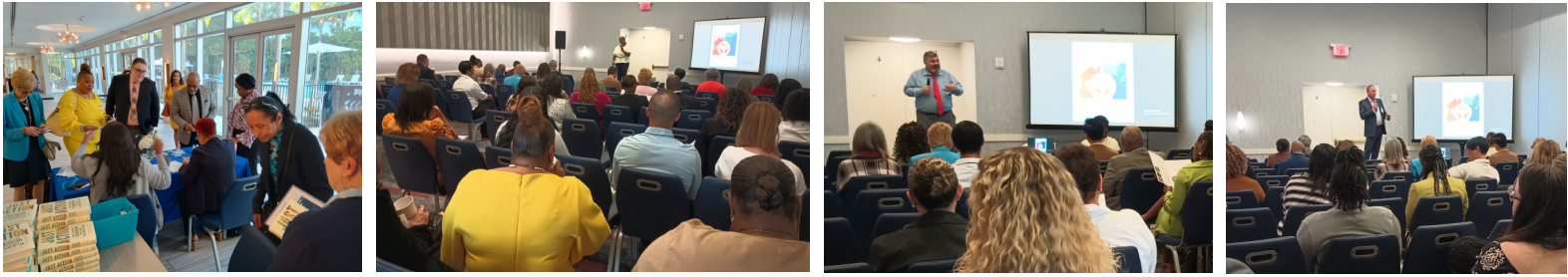
“The department conducted an investigation and filed this lawsuit after a woman and her real estate agent informed the department that she was turned

away from renting a unit at the Monticello building because she had a son under age 12,” said the DOJ, via a press release. “The department’s allegations were based, in part, on evidence generated by the department’s Fair Housing Testing Unit, in which individuals pose as prospective renters to gather information about possible discriminatory practices.”

At the end of the day, the DOJ reported that Isle of Paradise will be made to pay \$52,000. Of this, \$39,000 is going to the people who were the victims of the discrimination and going to civil penalties under the law. Also, according to the settlement, Isle of Paradise personnel will be made to “undergo fair housing training and to submit periodic reports to the department.”

Finally, with this case, the DOJ has set up a pipeline for receiving related complaints. Anybody else who feels that they are also victims of discrimination at the property is asked to email [IsleofParadise@usdoj.gov](mailto:IsleofParadise@usdoj.gov) or [fairhousing@usdoj.gov](mailto:fairhousing@usdoj.gov) or call 833-591-0291, selecting option 1 for English or 2 for Spanish, then option 1 for housing discrimination, and then option 7 for Isle of Paradise.

# Broward Fair Housing Month event photos!



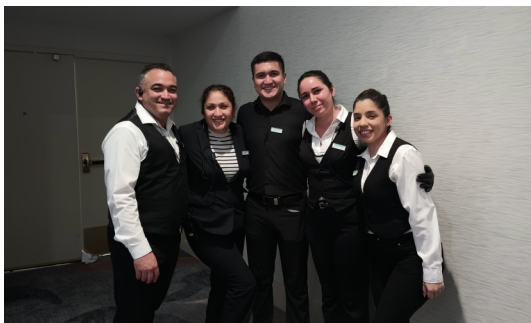
Top row, left to right: workshop attendees arrive, and the workshop audience is addressed by Charmaine Williams of HOPE, Alex Morales of the Broward County Housing Division, and Michael Rajner of Broward County Human Rights. Bottom: Edwin Cordova, Esq. from Legal Aid of Broward, Erica Terry of the Broward Property Appraiser Office, Dr. Ned Murray of FIU, and Nova law student John Lindner with Nova professor Matthew Dietz, Esq. address the workshop audience.



Above, Leah Rothstein speaks at the luncheon. Below, the wonderful wait staff who worked during the luncheon, and fellowship afterwards.



Left to right, Charmaine Williams, HOPE President & CEO Keenya Robertson, Esq., Pastor Michael Anderson of New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church, and Alex Morales address the luncheon crowd.



## Please be sure to sign up for HOPE's e-mail list!

Feeling like you haven't gotten an e-mail from us in a while? HOPE's e-mail list has been switched over to the service called Mailchimp! If you haven't already, please enter your email address to be sent announcements and our quarterly newsletter!

To sign up, please search on Google for hopefhc mailchimp, and navigate to the page simply titled "Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc.", which, when you get there, looks like this screen shot —>

Thank you!

### Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc.

HOPE, Inc. fights housing discrimination in Florida's Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. Please enter your email address below to be emailed our quarterly newsletter, where we highlight national and local fair housing news!

Thank you!

Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE), Inc.  
We fight housing discrimination

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# Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The concept of “affirmatively furthering fair housing” is based on Section 808 (e) (5) of the federal Fair Housing Act which states that the Secretary of HUD shall administer housing and community development programs in a manner that affirmatively furthers the purpose of the Fair Housing Act. We dedicate this space to Miami-Dade and Broward jurisdictions that receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and partner with HOPE to implement the following outreach.

## Broward Area Outreach

The following jurisdictions were impacted by Broward area outreach activities during the quarter: Broward County, Davie, Fort Lauderdale, Tamarac, and other locations.

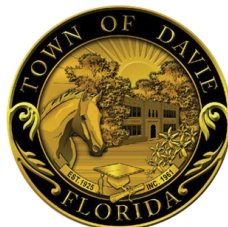
**Fair Housing and Predatory Lending Presentations:** These presentations consist of PowerPoint visuals, formal lectures, question and answer periods, and informational packages. All presentations are modified to meet the individual needs of the sponsor. The following presentations were conducted (in English, unless otherwise noted).

- Amazing Community Partners, Lauderhill: 1/13/24, 2/10/24, 3/9/24
- Broward County Housing Authority, Lauderdale Lakes: 1/13/24, 2/10/24, 3/9/24
- City of Tamarac, Tamarac: 3/28/24
- Consolidated Credit Solutions, Fort Lauderdale: 1/27/24, 2/28/24
- Hispanic Unity, Hollywood: 1/20/24, 2/17/24
- Housing Foundation of America, Pembroke Pines: 1/13/24, 1/20/24, 2/10/24, 2/17/24, 2/24/24, 3/2/24, 3/9/24, 3/10/24, 3/23/24
- Oasis of Hope, Pompano Beach: 1/20/24, 2/17/24, 3/16/24
- Urban League of Broward County, Fort Lauderdale: 1/10/24, 1/27/24, 2/10/24, 3/9/24, 3/20/24
- **Housing Provider Rights and Responsibilities Presentations:** Presentations designed for the specific needs of local housing providers.
- Consolidated Credit Solutions, Fort Lauderdale: 2/8/24
- Broward Small Cities Meeting, Fort Lauderdale: 3/14/24

**Community, Cultural, Health, and Job Fairs:** Local community events to diversify outreach efforts, counseling members of the general public on their rights and responsibilities.



Rob Collins, Esq., HOPE’s Education & Outreach Coordinator for Miami-Dade County, presents at a homebuyer event hosted by The Mortgage Firm on January 20, 2024, in Miami Gardens, FL.



# Miami-Dade Area Outreach

The following entitlement jurisdictions were impacted by Miami-Dade area outreach activities during the quarter: the Cities of Hialeah, Miami Beach, and North Miami, as well as other locations.

## Fair Housing and Predatory Lending Presentations (conducted in English, unless otherwise noted):

- Central High School, West Little River: 2/23/24
- Centro Campesino (English & Spanish), Florida City: 1/13/24, 1/27/24, 2/10/24, 2/24/24, 3/9/24, 3/23/24
- Cuban American National Council (English & Spanish), Little Havana: 1/5/24, 1/17/24, 1/26/24, 2/9/24, 3/8/24, 3/20/24, 3/29/24
- Experts Resource Community Center (English and Haitian Creole), Miami Gardens, West Little River, & North Miami: 1/13/24, 1/27/24, 2/10/24, 2/24/24, 3/9/24, 3/23/24, 3/28/24
- Haitian American Community Development Corporation (English & Creole), Little Haiti: 1/26/24, 3/8/24
- Harding Village, Miami Beach: 2/7/24
- Housing Foundation of America (English & Spanish), Miami Gardens & Palmetto Bay: 1/27/24, 2/17/24, 2/24/24, 3/16/24, 3/23/24
- Miami Dade College - Wolfson, Downtown Miami: 1/10/24, 3/6/24
- Ten North Group, Opa-locka: 1/20/24, 2/24/24, 3/23/24
- Real Estate, Education and Community Housing (English & Spanish), Kendall: 1/13/24, 1/27/24, 2/10/24, 2/24/24, 3/2/24, 3/23/24
- Trinity Empowerment (English & Spanish), Goulds: 1/20/24
- University of Miami, Coral Gables: 2/5/24, 2/15/24, 2/29/24

## Provider Presentations:

- Coordinated Victims Assistance Center, Coconut Grove: 1/25/24
- South Dade Cares Coalition, Homestead: 2/1/24

## Community Fairs:

- Central High School, career event, West Little River: 2/21/24
- Clark Center, senior resource fair, Downtown Miami: 2/14/24

- Florida International University College of Law, public interest fair, University Park: 2/8/24
- Killian High School, career event, Kendall: 2/20/24
- Krop High School, career event, Ives Estates: 3/20/24
- Miami Dade College - Hialeah, community fair, Hialeah: 2/7/24
- Miami Dade College - Homestead, career fair, Homestead: 3/6/24
- Miami Dade College - North, community fair, Westview: 2/21/24
- Milander Center, senior dance, Hialeah: 1/11/24
- (The) Mortgage Firm, homebuyers events, Miami Gardens and North Miami: 1/20/24, 2/10/24
- Morton Service Center, community tabling, Hialeah: 3/12/24, 3/27/24
- Norland High School, career event, Norland: 3/13/24
- North Miami High School, career event, North Miami: 3/21/24
- Northwestern High School, career event, Liberty City: 1/31/24
- Turner Tech High School, career event and health fair, West Little River: 1/23/24, 3/19/24
- South Dade High School, career event, Homestead: 2/13/24
- University of Miami, law review symposium and public interest law fair, Coral Gables: 2/9/24, 2/14/24



## Join the fight against discrimination! Become a tester!

Please join us in this movement (and make some extra cash as well!) - become a civil rights investigator! Interested people should contact HOPE's Testing Coordinators. Training consists of a paid training session, and after training, available testers are contacted as needed. Each assignment pays \$40-\$110.

Call today! Miami-Dade: (305) 651-4673, Broward: (954) 742-3778.

Applicant must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Have no convictions of a misdemeanor involving truth, veracity or honesty or of any felony
- Have good observational and writing skills
- Be able to donate approximately 4 hours for each test
- Be punctual with reliable transportation

**Do YOU Suspect  
Housing Discrimination,  
Harassment, or Predatory Lending?**

**Call HOPE TODAY!  
Miami-Dade: (305) 651-4673  
Broward: (954) 742-3778**

# HOPE FORUM

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This document is available in an accessible format for people with disabilities upon request.  
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**HOPE**  
**Attn: Membership**  
**11501 NW 2nd Ave**  
**Miami, FL 33168**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$35.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$75.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Friend (\$100.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-Profit (\$250.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Corporate (\$500.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Good Neighbor (\$1,000.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining Partner (\$10,000.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Juniors For Justice (\$5.00) (13-18 years old)

\_\_\_\_\_ Pennies from Heaven (children 12 and under)

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unable to contribute but please send me *HOPE Forum*

### There are laws against discrimination in the rental or sale of housing on the basis of:

- ◇ Race
- ◇ Color
- ◇ National Origin
- ◇ Religion
- ◇ Marital Status
- ◇ Pregnancy
- ◇ Familial Status (having children)
- ◇ Disability
- ◇ Sex (gender)
- ◇ Veteran Status
- ◇ Age
- ◇ HIV Status
- ◇ Sexual Orientation
- ◇ Gender Identity
- ◇ Gender Expression
- ◇ Political Affiliation
- ◇ Source of Income
- ◇ Ancestry
- ◇ Being a victim of domestic violence or human trafficking

**Do you suspect that you have been a victim of housing discrimination?  
Help is available; don't delay!**

**Call the HOPE DISCRIMINATION HELPLINE!**  
**Miami-Dade: 305-651-HOPE (4673)**  
**Broward: 954-567-0545**  
**TDD: 800-955-8771**  
**or file a complaint at [www.hopefhc.com](http://www.hopefhc.com)**