

January 22, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Philadelphia Apartment Owner Pays \$42,000 for Failure to Make Reasonable Accommodations for Residents with Disabilities

Fort Washington, PA -The Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania (“HECP”), has entered into an agreement resolving a federal housing discrimination complaint against Post Presidential Property Owner, LLC and Post Commercial Real Estate, LLC, the owner and manager of Presidential City Apartments in Philadelphia, for violating the disability portion of the federal Fair Housing Act. The agreement came after a charge of discrimination issued in November by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In July of 2018, HECP received a complaint alleging that Presidential City Apartments was refusing to waive pet fees for assistance animals when requested as a reasonable accommodation by residents with disabilities. HECP conducted an investigation verifying that Presidential City refused to permit emotional support animals without extra fees, as well as their additional unwillingness to allow reserved parking spaces for residents with mobility disabilities.

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, known as the Fair Housing Act, makes it unlawful to discriminate in connection with any housing related transactions, based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or familial status. Housing providers are obligated under this law to permit reasonable accommodations, or changes in policies or practices, when necessary for residents with disabilities to use and enjoy their dwelling. Furthermore, the Fair Housing Act prohibits housing providers from placing any conditions on the granting of disability-related accommodations, including charging extra fees. Disability has been protected under the Fair Housing Act since 1988.

“The refusal to permit assistance animals and reserved parking spaces are two of the most common housing discrimination complaints that we receive at HECP. Providers of rental housing need to understand that denying individuals with disabilities the accommodations they need to use and enjoy their dwelling units

or imposing extra fees as a condition of granting reasonable accommodations is a violation of the Fair Housing Act and denying reasonable accommodation requests can expose housing providers to significant penalties.” said Rachel Wentworth, Executive Director of HECP.

Post Presidential Property Owner, LLC and Post Commercial Real Estate, LLC signed an agreement that will result in the reimbursement of all pet fees charged to residents with assistance animals over the past three years, the review and resolution of all improper denials of reasonable accommodation requests over the past three years, and payments totaling \$42,000 to HECP to cover a portion of the costs incurred to bring about the agreement and to provide future consumer education regarding the fair housing rights of persons with disabilities. Additionally, the respondent has agreed to participate in a comprehensive fair housing training and to revise their policies to comply with the Fair Housing Act.

The Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania has worked since 1956 to eliminate housing discrimination through education, advocacy, and enforcement of fair housing laws. HECP’s work serves a population of over 4.65 million in the seven-county Philadelphia and Lehigh Valley regions. As the nation’s oldest fair housing agency, HECP’s successes include eradicating discriminatory practices at nearly 50,000 units of housing. HECP’s investigations are funded in part by the Fair Housing Initiatives Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. HECP was represented in this matter by Abara Law Firm of Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.

Anyone suspecting that they were denied housing for discriminatory reasons, or any housing provider who wants information on how they can operate their business in compliance with the Fair Housing Act should contact HECP at 267-419-8918 or visit www.equalhousing.org.