



Civil Rights Department

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Civil Rights Department Announces \$110,000 Mediated Settlement to Resolve Alleged Failure by Assisted Living Facilities to Accommodate Seniors with Disabilities

Testing by nonprofit fair housing organization identifies multiple alleged failures to provide ASL interpretation for fictional deaf grandmother

SACRAMENTO – The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) today announced a \$110,000 mediated settlement with five Southern California assisted living facilities over alleged failures to provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for seniors with disabilities. The settlement is the result of testing by the Fair Housing Federation of Southern California that identified multiple alleged failures to provide or attempt to accommodate ASL interpretation for a fictional deaf grandmother seeking to reside at the facilities. Under state and federal law, nonprofit fair housing organizations may be authorized to carry out testing — including by posing as another individual in need of disability accommodations — to help identify and eliminate discriminatory housing practices. In addition to monetary compensation, the settlement requires the assisted living facilities to take proactive steps to prevent future discrimination, including through training, policy changes, and the provision of information to prospective residents about their civil rights.

“People with disabilities are entitled to fair access to housing,” **said CRD Director Kevin Kish.** “This settlement is an important reminder that assisted living facilities cannot categorically deny access to American Sign Language interpretation to prospective tenants. Whether it’s through private suits, government enforcement actions, or fair housing testing, it takes all of us working together to protect and uphold the civil rights of our state’s residents. This case demonstrates the power of fair housing testing — and it will help prevent future discrimination at these facilities.”

In 2023, CRD received multiple complaints from the Fair Housing Federation of Southern California that alleged five Southern California assisted living facilities denied a fictional deaf grandmother the opportunity to apply for housing at the facilities by failing to engage in an interactive process to accommodate a need for ASL. Pursuant to its statutory authority, CRD investigated the complaints and provided for an opportunity for the involved entities to voluntarily resolve the matter through mediation with the department’s [Dispute Resolution Division](#). The division operates within CRD to provide free, neutral mediation services to help parties resolve disputes and address discrimination complaints filed with CRD. Each year, the division resolves hundreds of complaints, resulting in policy changes and millions of dollars in direct relief to impacted Californians.

As part of the settlement, the assisted living facilities — located in Hermosa Beach, Playa Vista, San Gabriel, Thousand Oaks, and Torrance — and their management companies have agreed to:

- Conduct a good-faith comprehensive review of their written fair housing policies and implement all modifications necessary to make the polices fully compliant with California law.
- Adopt and implement modifications to their equal access polices regarding people with sensory disabilities who use auxiliary aids and services, including residents and prospective residents who are hard of hearing or deaf.
- Train intake personnel, caregivers, and site managers on the changes to equal access policies.
- Provide a copy of the updated equal access policy to all deaf and hard of hearing prospective residents and their families for every housing accommodation owned or managed by the respondents in California.
- Include the term “Fair Housing Opportunity” in every future advertisement for available housing accommodations in California.
- Pay \$110,000 to the Fair Housing Federation of Southern California, a nonprofit fair housing organization.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of discrimination, CRD may be able to assist you through its complaint process. General information about CRD’s complaint process and how to file a complaint is available [here](#). General information regarding California’s protections against discrimination in housing is available [here](#). General information regarding protections against disability discrimination is available [here](#).

The settlement announced today was mediated by Senior Attorney Mediator Bruce W. Carter. The matter was investigated by Gloria Morales and Leslye Oseguera with CRD’s Enforcement Division.

The entities covered under the settlement include Sunrise Senior Living Management; Welltower Opco Group, LLC; SZR Westlake Village Propco; AL US/San Gabriel Senior Housing, LP; Sunrise Torrance Senior PropCo LLC; and AL US/Playa Vista Senior Housing, LP.

A copy of the settlement is available [here](#).

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The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) is the state agency charged with enforcing California’s civil rights laws. CRD’s mission is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state-fund programs and activities, and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit calcivilrights.ca.gov.

