

Following Housing Discrimination Investigation, AG's Office Reaches Settlement With Managers of Our Lady's Guild House

Settlement Requires Management to Protect Tenants from Eviction and Rent Increases While Sale of Building is Pending; Building Will Permanently Remain Affordable Housing

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Office of the Attorney General

BOSTON — Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell announced today that the owners and managers of Our Lady's Guild House (OLGH), a single-occupancy apartment building for women in Boston's Fenway neighborhood, have agreed to pay \$115,000 and to provide protections against evictions and rent increases while the sale of the building is pending, settling allegations of age and disability discrimination against long-term tenants. The settlement with the AG's Office also requires the property owner to put deed restrictions in place, ensuring that the property be used for affordable housing in perpetuity and that six long-term tenants be allowed to remain in the building.

"Our elders and residents living with disabilities deserve more than just our respect. We owe them an opportunity to live long and healthy lives, free from discrimination and the fear of being pushed out of their homes," said **AG Campbell**. "This settlement provides stability and safety for the women who have called Our Lady's Guild House home for years, and our office will continue to protect access to affordable housing across the Commonwealth."

"Residents of OLGH first filed discrimination complaints in 2018 when the management of OLGH brought no fault eviction proceedings to rid the

building of long-term tenants in violation of fair housing laws,” said **Margaret Turner, Senior Attorney at Greater Boston Legal Services**. “The residents are very pleased that their discrimination case is finally resolved. OLGH has now decided to sell the building and residents are urging the new owners to keep it as SRO [Single Room Occupancy] housing for women, so that OLGH can continue to provide much needed safe, affordable housing for women, as well as the gender diverse. We appreciate the support and hard work of the Attorney General’s Office.”

“The enforcement action brought by the Attorney General against OLGH and this settlement represent a significant win for both the long-time residents of OLGH and for tenants throughout the Commonwealth,” said **Pattie Whiting, Clinical Instructor and Lecturer on Law at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau**. “It sends a clear message to landlords that they will face significant consequences if they choose to engage in behavior or practices that are discriminatory or otherwise unlawful, and that the Attorney General takes violations of Massachusetts’ consumer protection and discrimination laws very seriously.”

The assurance of discontinuance settles an investigation by the AG’s Office into allegations that Our Lady’s Guild House, Inc. (OLGH) and MRR Management violated the state’s consumer protection and antidiscrimination laws by discriminating against current, former and prospective tenants on the basis of age and disability. The AG Office’s investigation specifically found that the property owner and manager illegally targeted elderly long-term residents for no-cause evictions, advertised and imposed tenancy restrictions based on age and ability, imposed residency time limits that resulted in the displacement of elderly long-term tenants and failed to provide reasonable accommodations and modifications to the building requested by the tenants. The AG’s Office further alleged that the entities failed to comply with security deposit and rental fee requirements under the law.

The AG's Office began investigating the entities' practices after receiving several complaints from tenants at the property that alleged discriminatory practices by OLGH and MRR Management.

Specifically, the assurance of discontinuance requires the property owner and manager to dismiss pending eviction claims against current tenants and to place deed restrictions on the property to ensure that the buyers utilize the building for affordable housing in perpetuity; allow six current long-term tenants to live at the property for as long as they choose, subject to limited rent increases; and provide a community space at the property. OLGH and MRR Management are also required to pay the state a total of \$115,000 in penalties, most of which will be distributed to seven long-term tenants at the property who were harmed by the alleged discriminatory practices. The assurance prevents OLGH and MRR Management from taking any adverse actions against tenants and raising rents until the property is sold; from retaliating against any tenants; and from forming or affiliating with a separate entity for the purpose of circumventing the settlement.

The Massachusetts Attorney General's Office is committed to enforcing the state's [antidiscrimination laws](#) and encourages those who have concerns about housing discrimination to call the office's Civil Rights Division at 617-963-2917 or to file a [complaint online](#). To view a copy of the AG's guide to landlord and tenant rights click [here](#). For information on our state's fair housing laws [click here](#).

Today's settlement matter was handled by Deputy Division Chief Shafaq Islam of AG Campbell's Civil Rights Division.

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