



## HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### APRIL IS FAIR HOUSING MONTH: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

*H-GAC Reminds Area Residents to Stay Informed of Their Fair Housing Rights*

**HOUSTON, TX** – The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) recognizes April as Fair Housing Month and reminds homebuyers and renters to be aware of their rights under the Fair Housing Act.

This year's theme is fair housing rights for people with disabilities. In recognition of the month, H-GAC's upcoming Bringing Back Main Street Roundtable – which will discuss how small towns and downtown organizations can integrate accessibility considerations into their work – will include fair housing as a component of the discussion. The roundtable will take place from 9:30 a.m. to noon on April 27. Registration information is available at [h-gac.com/bringing-back-main-street/roundtables-and-workshops](http://h-gac.com/bringing-back-main-street/roundtables-and-workshops).

The Texas Workforce Commission's Civil Rights Division and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs are also hosting a series of free fair housing training webinars covering topics such as reasonable accommodations and modifications, guidance on assistance animals, and how to create affirmative marketing plans designed to attract buyers and renters of all majority and minority groups. The full schedule of webinars is available at [tdhca.state.tx.us/fair-housing/announcements.htm](http://tdhca.state.tx.us/fair-housing/announcements.htm).

The Fair Housing Act was signed into law more than 50 years ago by President Lyndon Johnson as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of that law) prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or familial status. The act applies to rental properties, properties for sale, and mortgage lending.

Under the Fair Housing Act, real estate advertisements may not exclude any groups covered under the law. Sellers and landlords must make homes available, negotiate prices, and provide the same services for everyone protected under the Fair Housing Act. People must also be allowed to exercise their right to fair housing without fear of threats, coercion, or intimidation. More information about the Fair Housing Act can be found at [hud.gov/fairhousing](http://hud.gov/fairhousing).

Those who feel their rights have been violated should file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity by calling 1-800-669-9777 or 1-800-877-8339 for TTY. They can also submit a complaint form by email or online via the HUD website.

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### Houston-Galveston Area Council

H-GAC is a voluntary association of local governments and local elected officials from the 13-county Gulf Coast planning region, which includes an area of 12,500 square miles and more than 7 million people. H-GAC works to promote efficient and accountable use of local, state, and federal tax dollars; serves as a problem-solving and information forum for local governments; and helps analyze trends and conditions affecting the region. For more information, visit [h-gac.com](http://h-gac.com).