

**DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING**

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**DFEH SETTLES HOUSING DISCRIMINATION CASE FOR \$575,000**

*Landlord denied tenant with disabilities reasonable accommodations*

San Francisco-The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) has settled a housing discrimination case for \$575,000 on behalf of a 66 year-old woman with disabilities whose landlord refused to cash her rent checks and repeatedly served her with eviction notices after she had suffered serious brain damage in a car accident.

DFEH filed a lawsuit in San Francisco Superior Court alleging housing discrimination on the basis of disability after the landlord, John Yo Wong, refused to accept rent payments and tried to evict Irene Reynoso nine times from an apartment she had lived in for approximately 50 years. In the 1970s, Ms. Reynoso sustained serious injuries when two cars were street racing and struck the parked car she was sitting in.

In 2013, after her disabilities made it difficult for her to manage her finances and her physical condition deteriorated, Ms. Reynoso made three reasonable accommodation requests to her landlord: 1) that he accept rent checks signed by her sister; 2) that he allow another sister, Ms. Reynoso's caregiver, to stay with her; and 3) that he provide Ms. Reynoso with a key to a more accessible entrance to the garbage room. When the landlord refused, Ms. Reynoso and her sisters sought help from the nonprofit Housing Equality Law Project (HELP).

Despite numerous attempts by Ms. Reynoso, her sisters and HELP to obtain reasonable accommodations, the landlord refused all requests and served Ms. Reynoso with multiple eviction notices.

"The Fair Employment and Housing Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act safeguard the rights of all Californians to have full and equal access to housing accommodations without regard to their disabilities," said DFEH Director Kevin Kish. "In this case, Ms. Reynoso's requests were reasonable and would have allowed her to continue living in her home. They should have been granted without delay."

The landlord agreed to pay \$575,000 to Ms. Reynoso, her sisters, and HELP to resolve the discrimination allegations and various landlord-tenant claims. The settlement also requires the landlord to attend fair housing training, develop a reasonable accommodations policy, and post informational DFEH posters at all of his rental properties.

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*The DFEH is the state agency charged with enforcing California's civil rights laws. The mission of the DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations and from hate violence. For more information, visit the Department's Web site at [www.dfeh.ca.gov](http://www.dfeh.ca.gov).*