



Department of Fair Employment & Housing

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DFEH Settles Housing Discrimination Case Against San Francisco Property Manager

Tenants with mobility disabilities to receive \$25,000 and a designated parking spot

Sacramento – The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) has settled a housing discrimination case against property management company Laurel Realty, owner Optimal Partners, GP, and the property manager, involving two long-term tenants whose requests for reasonable accommodations to park in their building's vacant garage were repeatedly denied.

The tenants filed a complaint with the DFEH in August 2018 alleging that they had made multiple requests to park in the vacant garage attached to their San Francisco apartment to accommodate their mobility-related disabilities. The tenants feared leaving their apartment because of the risk of being unable to find an accessible parking spot in their neighborhood upon their return. The property manager denied their requests to park in the garage and later leased the garage to a new tenant.

DFEH found cause to believe that violations of the Fair Employment and Housing Act and Unruh Civil Rights Act had occurred. Following a mandatory mediation, the housing providers agreed to allow the tenants to park in the garage and pay the complainants \$25,000.

“Tenants should not feel confined to their homes because of disability-related restrictions that can be accommodated,” said DFEH Director Kevin Kish. “Housing providers in California must engage with tenants so that individuals with disabilities are afforded equal enjoyment and use of their homes.”

In addition to providing the parking spot and the monetary settlement, the respondents will pay \$1,500 to the DFEH in attorneys' fees and costs, as well as develop a new anti-discrimination policy, distribute that policy and fair housing brochures to tenants, and undergo fair housing training.

Kaitlin Toyama, Staff Counsel, represented the DFEH in this proceeding.

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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 and human trafficking. For more information, visit the DFEH's website at www.dfeh.ca.gov.

