

Director, Source of Income Discrimination Early Intervention and Enforcement Unit

Department: New York State Division of Human Rights

Location: Albany or New York City

Salary: \$140,000 - \$150,000

New York State adopted an amendment to the New York Executive Law § 296(5)(a)(1), enacted on April 12, 2019, to prohibit housing discrimination based on lawful sources of income in all communities' statewide, including whether their rent is fully or partially paid by a federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher ("HCV"). The New York State Division of Human Rights ("DHR") has enforcement authority for this law and is now seeking a dynamic leader for a newly formed Source of Income Discrimination Enforcement Unit ("the SOI Unit"). This new team will bolster the State's efforts to ensure that HCV recipients can locate housing without being discriminated against based on their source of income. The SOI Unit will intervene quickly to educate landlords and real estate professionals while assisting voucher participants in securing rental housing free of discrimination. Governor Kathy Hochul highlighted this initiative in her 2024 State of the State address. DHR is establishing the SOI Unit in partnership with the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corp. ("HTFC").

Summary of Responsibilities:

Under the direction of the Deputy Commissioner of Investigations, the Director of the SOI Unit is responsible for planning, executing, and managing a new team operating within DHR. The Director shall take the lead in hiring staff, developing policies and procedures, and establishing operations for a team of 10-20 employees. They shall plan for and coordinate all outreach, enforcement and prevention activities, and will be accountable for outcomes related to this initiative.

Primary duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Hire, train and supervise a team of investigators and outreach specialists to engage residential landlords and assist participants who hold Section 8 HCVs in obtaining safe and suitable housing; establish an organizational chart and develop minimum qualifications and job descriptions for each employee; Set individual and team goals and review employee performance.
- Recommend a yearly budget for the SOI Unit; approve staffing and other expenses in compliance with applicable federal and state requirements; liaison with staff from HTFC to coordinate expense approval procedures, procurements, budgeting, hiring, etc.
- Draft policies and procedures for the SOI Unit; Implement a training plan for staff and revise procedures as necessary.
- In conjunction with the Deputy Commissioner of External Affairs for DHR, develop promotional and informational materials about the initiative to be provided to the public, families, stakeholders, vulnerable persons and elected leaders.
- Develop an outreach and education campaign to inform the public about the state's Source

of Income Discrimination law and how to report potential violations; engage the NYS Office of General Services and other partners to initiate a multi-media promotional campaign to reach target households.

- Cultivate relationships with state and local housing leaders; meet on a regular basis with nonprofit and government housing agencies to ensure responsiveness and coordinate referrals; educate housing providers and real estate professionals on the obligation of state law to accept Section 8.
- Establish and implement procedures for receiving and tracking complaints regarding potential SOI discrimination; review status of complaints with staff regularly; Supervise and consult on investigations and coordinate engagement with landlords to enforce the law; Determine when legal action is required and initiate referrals; Monitor intake and jurisdictional assessments of claims relative to the Unit.
- Coordinate with the Housing Investigations Unit and Housing Litigation Unit within DHR to ensure that cases involving Section 8 are resolved appropriately.
- Ensure timely and appropriate response to complainants seeking relief from unlawful denial of their Section 8 vouchers; Expediently resolve complaints.
- Identify a data solution for accepting complaints on-line, and for managing and tracking case status; Coordinate with the NYS Office of Information Technology Services (“ITS”) to submit technology-related requests, including laptops, phones, application development, etc.
- Establish reporting templates and submit timely reports regarding outcomes to the HTFC and DHR leadership.
- Perform other functions as necessary.

Minimum Qualifications:

Bachelor’s degree and eight (8) years of relevant experience -or-

*Substitution: Six (6) years of experience with a relevant master’s degree, Ph.D. or Juris Doctorate.

The preferred candidate will have a law degree and be admitted to the NYS Bar. Additionally, the preferred candidate will have managerial experience engaging with housing advocates, attorneys and individuals in need of housing. The incumbent must have subject-matter expertise in fair housing law, strong organizational and logistical skills, the ability to track and measure multiple work products simultaneously, and experience in supporting historically marginalized populations.

When applying, please clearly outline how you meet the minimum qualifications as outlined above.

TO APPLY, PLEASE SEND A RESUME AND COVER LETTER TO HRresume@dhr.ny.gov