

Families can fight discrimination

By Bill Casper
staff writer

If you want to rent an apartment and have children you may experience difficulty.

Refusal to rent to those with children is most likely to happen in the suburbs, and often it's illegal discrimination that can be fought in court.

Age discrimination is widespread in Detroit and surrounding suburban communities, but not much is being done about it, according to Margaret Poindexter, supervisor in the complaint and investigation division of the Department of Civil Rights in Detroit.

"The major problem is that no one is aware of the discrimination law as it relates to children, and if they are, they don't know who to complain to," said Mrs. Poindexter. "You can look in the classified section of any newspaper and see the ads saying no children allowed, but few complain to us about it."

"You see most of these open discriminatory advertisements for outlying apartment complexes (in the suburbs), she continued. "Our problem in following up on these ads is a lack of manpower. We just don't have enough people to apprise the renters of their obligations under the law."

THE COURTS have ruled that discrimination on the basis of age is illegal under current federal law, with some exceptions, Mrs. Poindexter said.

She said the law allows for age restrictions when an owner occupies one of two dwellings in the same building and rents out the other. A boarding so may a housing complex designated for senior citizens 50 and over.

Some rental managers have imposed regulations like denying children the use of the apartment swimming pool on certain days. The courts have struck down those policies too, said Mrs. Poindexter.

The big question still remaining is whether rental managers can impose age restrictions on the use of apartment facilities, she said. "The courts have not yet handed down a decision on that issue."

Most of the age restrictions are occurring at small rental complexes, although we also have found age restriction at some of the larger apartment complexes. Most of our age discrimination cases originate outside of the city of Detroit, but we suspect the same situation exists in Detroit.

Age discrimination complaints, she added, come in connection with rental units rather than condominium sales. It's Mrs. Poindexter's opinion that the complaint load does not really "reflect the total problem that exists in the housing market."

IT ALSO affects single women, but not as much as formerly. "A single woman very often has a

problem with discrimination and that's often tied with age discrimination against her children," said Mrs. Poindexter.

"However, our complaint activity for sex discrimination is not as heavy as that for age discrimination."

Mrs. Poindexter noted that only a small portion of the department's complaint activity involves discrimination against the handicapped.

But she added, "We have no way of knowing if our case activity reflects

the real problem in the housing market."

Other complaints of illegal discrimination received by the Civil Rights Department in lesser numbers include discrimination against unmarried couples and two single persons of the same sex, according to Mrs. Poindexter.

Most discrimination complaints in the sales area involve race and national origin, she said.

MSU names graduates

Farmington and Farmington Hills residents were among the 5,218 candidates for spring term at Michigan State University.

The commencement speaker at the June 13 ceremony for undergraduates was General Motors President F. James McDonald, who also received an honorary doctor of laws degree.

The graduates are: Therese Anton, Gerald Braude, Carol Galloway, Jerianne Gugel, Elizabeth Herzog, Paul Maes, Cynthia Mathews, Mary Ratliff, Gary Rogers and Bryce Allen.

Also graduating are: Jeanne Ambrose, Suzanne Blas, Kelli Bowen, Scott Brimester, Elizabeth Coleman, Christine Deconick, Ralph Depolo, Cathi Dil-

lon, Deborah Duquette, Lisa Elian, Steven Frye, Lori Galper, James Garneau, Mary Garner, Leslie Goldman, Bryant Goulet, Michael Hurley, Susan James, Karen Kalajian and Karen Kolbasa.

Alan Kovan, Robert Kraus, Donna Lademan, Faith Landsman, Scott Levine, Joama Lilly, David Lindsay, Richard Mark, Kerin McQuaid, Sandra McQuillan, Thomas Nestline, Anthony Palombo, Catherine Piche, Margaret Poelke, Mark Purcell, Theresa Rosso, Patricia Russell, Ronald Saja, David Saliba, Elizabeth Scott, Michael Scovill, Cynthia Somerville, Barbara Stewart, Gregory Stock, John Strand, Elizabeth Svadeba, Susan Unger, Cynthia Watts, Paul Wilkie, Richard Wright and Robert Wylm.



Balloon magic

Magician John Hovanesian of Farmington Hills made a big hit with the younger set at last Sunday's Livonia Spree pancake breakfast. Here, Hovanesian demonstrates how to make a dog out of balloons. Hovanesian was among some 3,000 area residents who turned out for the breakfast in Livonia's Eddie Edgar Arena.

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