

## **Realtors® Advocate for Fair Housing**

Beaver County – Although Realtors® are committed to fair housing practices year-round, April is when they commemorate the passage of the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968.

“The Fair Housing Act of 1968 was monumental,” said Beaver County Association of Realtors® President Sara Lowman. “The act protects people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, seeking housing assistance or engaging in other housing-related activities. It prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex – including gender identity and sexual orientation – familial status and disability. In our state, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act also protects against housing discrimination based on age, ancestry and usage, handling or training of assistance animals for persons with disabilities.”

Although more people now have opportunities to achieve homeownership than before, discrimination still occurs throughout every step of the homebuying process, from the initial search and securing financing to the final closing, based on race, gender, socioeconomic status and other factors.

As members of the National Association of Realtors®, Realtors® are now required to complete fair housing and anti-bias training upon becoming members, and every three years thereafter, coinciding with their Code of Ethics training timeline.

“Regardless of identity or background, everyone deserves to be treated fairly and equally throughout the entirety of the homebuying process,” Lowman said. “Homeownership offers individuals a foundation for security and an opportunity to build long-term and generational wealth.”

“As Realtors®, we subscribe to NAR’s Code of Ethics and are committed to adhering to the Fair Housing Act,” concluded Lowman. “Every day, we strive to promote equal housing opportunities for all and help people achieve their homeownership dreams.”

Homebuyers and sellers can seek products, services and prices from multiple companies to ensure that they’re receiving fair treatment. If consumers believe they’ve experienced a fair housing issue, they should contact the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission at [phrc.pa.gov](http://phrc.pa.gov).

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*The Beaver County Association of Realtors® is a trade/professional association that serves more than 600 members.*