



## Charleston County News Release

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### **Charleston County Partners with Municipalities for Fair Housing Month** *Three focus group sessions held this month*

April marks [Fair Housing Month](#) for the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD). [Charleston County Government](#), along with the municipalities of Charleston and North Charleston, are coming together to host fair housing focus groups for government/elected officials, housing industry professionals, community advocates and the general public. This collaborative effort will identify and analyze impediments to receiving equal treatment for all under the [Fair Housing Act](#) of 1968.

The Fair Housing Act makes it unlawful to discriminate in housing transactions based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, or family status.

J-QUAD Planning Group of Addison, Texas will assist in development of the study that is designed to assess the climate of housing opportunities available to residents of these communities. The upcoming focus groups will allow for open discussions and sharing of views and experiences related to housing policy and practices. One very positive outcome of the study is the potential for increased federal funding from HUD for housing and community development initiatives. In neighborhoods around the country, HUD recently awarded \$40.8 million to 108 fair housing organizations and non-profit agencies to address housing discrimination, including mortgage rescue scams.

For more information about the Fair Housing Act, including summaries of recent housing discrimination cases, go to [www.hud.gov/fairhousing](http://www.hud.gov/fairhousing). Participant dates, times and locations for the focus groups are provided below.

#### Community Advocates & General Public

Tuesday, April 26, 2011

3 – 5 p.m.

North Charleston City Hall

2500 City Hall Lane

Buist Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

North Charleston, SC

For more information, contact Dawn Henry, North Charleston Community Development Manager at 843-740-2579.

#### Housing Industry Professionals

Wednesday, April 27, 2011

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Charleston County Library- Auditorium,

68 Calhoun Street Wednesday, April 27, 2011 @ 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

For more information, contact Andrea Jones, Community Development Coordinator, at 843-724-3767.

#### Government & Elected Officials

Wednesday, April 27, 2011

2– 4 p.m.

Lonnie Hamilton, III Public Services Building

4045 Bridge View Drive, Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

North Charleston, SC 29405

For more information, contact Johnna C. Murray, Charleston County Community Services Program Manager at 843-202-6968.

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*J-QUAD works with municipal, county, and state governments to develop fair housing studies to meet U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requirements for the Community Development Block Grant Program. These studies combine a demographic profile, HMDA analysis, and community input with an evaluation of state and local fair housing law, local fair housing complaints, affordable housing production, and an index created to demonstrate areas prone to fair housing abuse into a document that provides a background for the identification of impediments to fair housing. These impediments are discussed and remedial actions are recommended to address each issue.*

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*HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) and [espanol.hud.gov](http://espanol.hud.gov).*