# Owner fined for rejecting disabled couple's request for first-floor pad

A Las Vegas landlord has been slapped with a $6,000 fine after his building manager refused to allow a couple with disabilities to move into a first-floor apartment, according to an announcement Thursday by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The tenants, who had problems getting around and lived in an upper unit of Las Vegas' Silver Creek Apartments at 6170 Boulder Highway, claimed that the building's manager repeatedly refused to move them into an apartment on the first floor.

On July 31, 2018, they filed a complaint with HUD, claiming they had requested to move into a first-floor apartment for seven years and were repeatedly denied the opportunity even as other residents moved into first-floor units at different points in time.

As a result, HUD charged the property representatives with violating the Fair Housing Act — a 1968 law that prohibits denying people housing based on disability along with other factors such as race, religion, sex and familial status. The same law also requires that housing providers make accommodations for people who cannot live in a particular unit due to their conditions.

On one occasion, the couple was told that a unit was available for them but — when they couldn't pay a $700 move-in fee and a $400 security deposit — was allegedly forced to move out. (Building owners and managers deny the discrimination charges.)

"Housing providers need to understand that many people with mobility impairments rely on accommodations to fully enjoy their home, and that they have an obligation to provide those accommodations," said Anna María Farías, the HUD's assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity, in a prepared statement.

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The property is owned by Silver Creek LV, LLC and managed by Stout Management Company, both located in Las Vegas. To avoid escalation, the two companies agreed to pay the couple $6,000, forgive them $1,392 in unpaid rent, and change their policies to include information that informs managers of their expectation to provide reasonable accommodation.

All of Silver Creek Apartments’ leasing and management staff will also need to complete training in the Fair Housing laws.

“Hopefully today’s settlement will make more housing providers aware of their responsibilities under the Fair Housing Act,” Farías said.

HUD regularly looks into instances of landlord and homeowners who discriminate against their tenants. Earlier this year, it charged a New Orleans landlord with discrimination for posting a ‘NO TEENAGERS PLEASE’ ad on a Craigslist listing.

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