



**FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL
OF ORANGE COUNTY**

Fostering Diversity in Housing

201 S. Broadway, Santa Ana, CA 92701-5633
714/569-0825 □ FAX 714/835-0281

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACTS:

Connie Der Torossian, Media Relations
714/569-0823 x 217 or 714/313-8699 (cell)
Dave Levy, Director of Development
714/569-0825 FAX: 714/835-0281

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF ORANGE COUNTY SETTLES
HOUSING DISCRIMINATION CASE FOR \$210,000**

***The Nonprofit Agency Settles a Case With the Owners of Several Costa Mesa Trailer
Parks Who Allegedly Discriminated Against Families With Children***

SANTA ANA, CALIF., November 26, 2002...The Fair Housing Council of Orange County announced today that the non-profit agency has reached a \$210,000 settlement in a housing discrimination case against Joseph G. Brown and three other defendants, owners of the Snug Harbor, El Nido and Anchor Trailer Parks in Costa Mesa, Calif. The Fair Housing Council joined Pamela Swick as a plaintiff in the action, who complained that she encountered discrimination against families with children when she tried to sell her mobilehome at the Snug Harbor Trailer Park.

While making no admission of liability or wrongdoing, Joseph G. Brown and defendants Donna M. Brown Snider, Deborah A. Brown Marheine and Leona Horowitz have agreed to pay a total of \$190,000 in damages and purchase Swick's mobile home for \$20,000, and that they, their employees and agents will not engage in unlawful housing discrimination. They also have agreed to change the rules and regulations in place at all their residential rental premises to delete any unlawful discriminatory terms and conditions against families with children. In addition, for the next three years, the defendants' employees and managers must attend fair housing training once a year, keep records of individuals inquiring about renting and make those records available to the Fair Housing Council, give all tenants fair housing information and post fair housing signs in all rental offices.

"I'm pleased to announce a settlement in this case, but even more thrilled about the clear message that this settlement sends to individuals who engage in housing discrimination," said Elizabeth Pierson, CEO/president of the Fair Housing Council of Orange County. "Housing discrimination against families with children violates the law and it will not be tolerated," she added.

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The complaint, filed in U.S. district court in Santa Ana in November 2001 by the Fair Housing Council, alleges that Brown, his co-defendants and their employees discriminated on against families with children by posing a sign stating "No Dogs, No Children" and discouraging families with children from applying to rent units or mobile home spaces. This is a direct violation of the federal Fair Housing Act, the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, as well as other state laws.

The case arose when Pamela Swick, the co-plaintiff in the case, decided to sell her mobile home, retained a real estate agent and placed her home on the market for sale. Swick and her agent received a number of inquiries from families with children expressing an interest in purchasing her home but in each case, the sale was frustrated and the potential purchaser discouraged because of Snug Harbor Trailer Park's policy which bars renting to families with children. When Swick and her agent told Snug Harbor's management that this policy was limiting their ability to sell Swick's home and a violation of federal law, the manager said that Snug Harbor has a long-standing policy not to allow children or pets and, because they are a trailer park they are not required to comply with the law. Swick sought help and contacted the Fair Housing Council of Orange County which investigated the case and found substantial evidence of discrimination against families with children at all three trailer parks.

The federal Fair Housing Act became law in 1968 and initially outlawed housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin. The Act's protections have been expanded twice. In 1974, discrimination based on sex was outlawed. In 1988, Congress made it illegal to discriminate against families with children or on the basis of handicap.

The Fair Housing Council of Orange County is a private, nonprofit organization formed in 1965 in the wake of the civil rights movement that resulted in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The agency incorporated in 1968, the same year that Congress extended civil rights protections to cover housing with the adoption of the Fair Housing Act. Under the direction of a 16 member volunteer board of directors and with a paid staff of 17, the agency works to fulfill a mission of fostering diversity and eliminating housing discrimination in Orange County. Contracting with local governments to provide fair housing services to all Orange County residents, the agency provides comprehensive community and industry education, individual counseling, mediation, low-cost advocacy and handles more than 1,000 issues concerning housing discrimination each year. The Fair Housing Council also recently expanded its programs to include comprehensive education programs for housing providers, property managers, lenders and real estate professionals. For more information, call 800/698-FAIR or 714/569-0823 or visit www.fairhousingoc.org.

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