



## Law School Clinic Seeks Limited Pro Bono Assistance with HUD FHA Discrimination Action Against the City of Miami

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### Project Title

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### Scope of Work

### Timing

### Jurisdiction

Federal

### Contact Information

For more information, please contact Guerby Noel ([guerby@lawfirmantiracismalliance.org](mailto:guerby@lawfirmantiracismalliance.org)) and Alexander Rundlet ([axr2779@miami.edu](mailto:axr2779@miami.edu)).

### Description

The Center for Ethics and Public Service at the University of Miami School of Law has done the preliminary work to a systemic housing discrimination enforcement action against the City of Miami for its land use, zoning, eviction, and demolition practices in the Coconut Grove Village West, Miami's first black settlement. These practices have resulted in large-scale displacement, establishing 'disparate impact' and 'segregative effect' violations of the federal FHA.

The clinic seeks pro bono assistance with the following:

1. Provide discrete research project support to advance theories of liability and remedial pathways in furtherance of the systemic housing discrimination claims presented by CJP with the support of CEPS on behalf of the Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance, Inc. (CGMA), the Coconut Grove Village West Homeowners and Tenants Association, Inc. (HOATA), and Grove Rights and Community Equity, Inc. (GRACE), and which claims are currently under administrative investigation by the Region IV Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (GRACE et a. v. City of Miami, Inquiry No. 734632 (Jul. 12, 2024).

2. Assume primary collaborative litigation responsibilities for causes of action to alternatively address displacement in the Coconut Grove Village West Community:

a. Declaratory/Injunctive Action against the City of Miami, declaring that Major Use Special Permit No. R-11-0538 ("MUSP;" the central planning and land use development order issued by the City of Miami that has driven the displacement of Coconut Grove Village West residents along Grand Ave.) is null and void because it has expired under provisions of the Miami 21 Zoning Ordinance (which limit the duration of development orders and limit the numbers of authorized extensions), and because extensions requested thereunder have been unlawfully presented by developer applicants and representatives, and unlawfully approved by zoning officials.

b. False Claim and related causes of action against certain developers who have broken ground and commenced construction under the MUSP, but who have done so after unlawfully requesting extensions of the MUSP (as summarized above); who have (at the Elemi and Bimini Block projects covered by the MUSP) planned for and begun construction of condominium units for sale and/or for rent, none of which include affordable housing units, as represented by counsel in seeking approval of the MUSP; who have (at the Elemi and Bimini Block projects covered by the MUSP) planned for and begun construction without complying with promises to not exclude workers who may have felony convictions, as represented by counsel in seeking approval of the MUSP; who have failed to comply with Community Benefits commitments made in connection with the MUSP application

c. False Claim and related causes of action against the City of Miami for misrepresenting compliance with fair housing standards, in connection with its application for and receipt of Community Development Block Grant and other HUD funding sources.

d. Provide support in government affairs-related tasks to advocate for broad-based remedial solutions to address displacement caused by the challenged land use, planning, zoning, demolition and eviction practices.

3. Full Fair Housing Act systemic housing discrimination claims based on disparate impact and segregative effect theories of liability, challenging land use, zoning, eviction and demolition practices in the Coconut Grove Village West neighborhood and other vulnerable neighborhoods in South Florida.

4. Assume primary or collaborative responsibility in a government relations capacity to formulate and advocate for robust and expansive remedies to address systemic housing discrimination in South Florida.

**Subtasks (0)**