

**FAIR HOUSING CENTER  
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# Fair Housing News

In 2015, Santa Monica adopted a city ordinance that included Section 8 vouchers as a source of income. (Santa Monica Municipal Code 4.28.030). The new municipal code states “(j) For purposes of this part, ‘source of income’ includes any lawful source of income or rental assistance from any federal, State, local or non-profit-administered benefit or subsidy program including, but not limited to, the Section 8 voucher program.” By doing this, Santa Monica made it unlawful for housing providers to discriminate against Section 8 voucher holders. Before this ordinance came into effect, it was lawful for housing providers to advertise that they do not accept Section 8 vouchers and refuse to rent to voucher holders.

Almost immediately, the Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles (AAGLA) filed a lawsuit challenging the city ordinance. AAGLA argued that by including Section 8 vouchers as a source of income, it conflicted with the California Government Code, which defines source of income as “lawful, verifiable income paid directly to a tenant or paid to a representative of a tenant. For the purposes of this definition, a landlord is not considered a representative of a tenant.” (Cal. Gov’t Code § 12927(i)).

In January 2017, the Los Angeles County Superior Court upheld the Santa Monica ordinance. Tenant rights activists saw this as a huge victory, especially for other cities who are considering adopting a similar ordinance. AAGLA responded by stating that it would appeal the decision.

Santa Monica Section 8 voucher holders are hoping that this ordinance will make it easier for them to find affordable housing.

**For More Information please call:  
The Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Inc.**



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