



SHRIVER CENTER

Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

HEADQUARTERS:

50 E. Washington St, Suite 500
Chicago, Illinois 60602

P: 312.263.3830

F: 312.263.3846

BOSTON OFFICE:

89 South St, Suite 407
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

P: 617.946.4672

F: 617.275.8991

www.povertylaw.org

When Discretion Means Denial is a recent report from the Shriver Center's Housing Justice Unit, discussing the problems with the policies of housing authorities across the country pertaining to the treatment of people with criminal records. Our office is working to try to address these injustices, including advocacy with HUD. That advocacy helped lead to HUD issuing new guidance to public housing authorities and owners of federally assisted housing on the treatment of people with arrest records by housing authorities and owners of federally-assisted housing. HUD references our report on page 5 of its November 2, 2015 notice.

Second, our unit is working to combat the recent trend of municipal ordinances called "crime-free" or "nuisance" ordinances that empower local governments in some cases to evict tenants based on the volume of police interaction with an address or tenant, or that subject tenants to the risk of eviction for minor ordinance violations related to the property that they may have no control over. Last year our office teamed with a coalition to pass a state law that prohibits local governments from enacting ordinances that may punish tenants based on a disability or their status as a survivor of domestic violence -- two groups of people who are most vulnerable to these ordinances. A recent report entitled *Reducing the Cost of Crime Free* was co-authored by the director of our housing unit, Kate Walz; it describes the problem and proposes alternative solutions.

When Discretion Meets Denial –

<http://povertylaw.org/sites/default/files/images/publications/WMDM-final.pdf>

November 2, 2015 HUD Guidance on Excluding the Use of Arrest Records in Housing Decisions -

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=PIH2015-19.pdf>

Reducing the Cost of Crime Free -

<http://povertylaw.org/sites/default/files/images/advocacy/housing/reducing-the-cost-of-crime-free.pdf>

Contact:

Kate Walz
Director, Housing Justice
katewalz@povertylaw.org
312-368-2679

Jeremy Bergstrom
Senior Staff Attorney, Housing Justice
jeremybergstrom@povertylaw.org
312-368-2677



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