



# Long Island Housing Services, Inc.

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[www.LIFairHousing.org](http://www.LIFairHousing.org)

Protecting Civil Rights for Long Islanders since 1969

Long Island  
celebrates the



50th Anniversary  
of the  
Fair Housing Act

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A 501(c)(3) nonprofit  
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# ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020

Fiscal Year ended 6/30/20

*Long Island Housing Services' mission is the elimination of unlawful housing discrimination and promotion of decent and affordable housing through advocacy and education.*

Dear Friends of Fair Housing:

Preparing this annual report provided the opportunity to review and be thankful for all that has been accomplished. For Long Island Housing Services (LIHS) FY 2020 (7/1/2019-6/30/2020) was filled with incredible challenges, major growth opportunities and landmark accomplishments. Some of the highlights were:

- Responded to and provided assistance for housing counseling services on issues related to rentals, purchase or mortgage issues (e.g. foreclosure prevention, Fair Housing), including a majority were low and low moderate income;
- Updated Social Media to reach greater numbers through Facebook page, Twitter Account and YouTube; enhanced its website: [www.LIFairHousing.org](http://www.LIFairHousing.org); provided direct access to numerous resources; responded to public's inquiries/requests for assistance through the site;
- Served on *Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board*; and active Member of the *National Fair Housing Alliance*
- Outreach to and collaboration with HUD-approved Housing Counseling agencies and related associates to prevent foreclosure
- Sponsored, co-sponsored or participated in approximately events, presentation, workshops, and clinics, Promoted Fair Housing and services, increased awareness of available resources, increase compliance, educate public, non-profit and housing related industry providers;
- Accomplished distribution of LIHS' signature *Get Acquainted ... Fair Housing Rights Guide for Long Island* available in English and Spanish;
- Developed or updated numerous new bilingual outreach materials to educate and serve the public about services available;

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- Assisted in federal entitlement agencies' compliance concerning required *Annual Action Plan updates to their Consolidated Plans* to Fair Housing;
  - Outreach to public and public-serving government and non-profit institutions to educate on locally available Fair Housing enforcement resources;
  - Maintains association with the *Public Advocacy Center at Touro Law Center* in Central Islip, NY;
  - Supported collaborative measures to advocate for measures to restrict lending abuses, to promote affordable housing, Fair Housing and Consumer Protections;
  - Received Excellent Performance Ratings from U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) related to competitive grant performance for Fair Housing Enforcement Initiatives and Organization Initiatives, having met or exceeded performance standards subsequent to on-site reviews and detailed required reporting and documentation reviews;
  - Maintained Certification as a HUD-approved Local Comprehensive Housing Counseling agency through meeting and exceeding performance standards subsequent to intensive reviews and related, detailed required reporting and documentation submissions;
  - Received GuideStar Platinum Seal for Transparency.
  - Maintained and provided ongoing training for Housing Counselors, Fair Housing program staff; and Staff Attorneys.
  - Provided bilingual and translation services for clients;
  - Maintained bilingual, Spanish-fluent Staff member
  - Trained Fair Housing/Lending Testers,
  - Maintained memberships and supported associations locally and nationally with numerous organizations such as: *National Fair Housing Alliance, National Community Reinvestment Coalition, National Low Income Housing Coalition; Health & Welfare Council of LI; Long Island Language Advocates (LILAC), Long Island Coalition for the Homeless; Poverty & Race Research Action Council; Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board; Touro Law Center's Public Advocacy Center, Housing HELP; ERASE Racism, New Yorkers for Responsible Lending; National Fair Housing Advocate; Non- Profit Coordinating Committee, HomeSmart NY; Central Islip Civic Council; Housing For All Coalition; NAACP; Huntington Town Housing Coalition; Long Island Coalition for the Homeless, et al.*
- Note LIHS' final audit for the most recently ended Fiscal Year: 7/1/2019 to 6/30/20, along with a roster of officers and members of the board, is available at [www.LIFairHousing.org](http://www.LIFairHousing.org)

Note: Program-specific reports below.

## **Fair Housing**

- Assisted 52 Fair Housing clients. 7/1/2019 -6/30/2020
  - **Cases settled:** Seven (7) Cases Settled: 4 source of income, 1 familial status, 1 Race and 1 disability
  - Settled 18-040: Source of Income. Long Island Housing Services, Inc. v. New Highway Apartments, et al. Resolution: \$10,000. Affirmative Relief (Fair Housing Training; non-discriminatory policy, etc.)

- Settled 19-019: Familial Status. John Salvi and Ann Salvi on their own behalf and on behalf of their minor children v. Heather wood House at Oakdale LLC, et al. Resolution: \$17,000.
- Settled 19-043: Source of Income. Long Island Housing Services, Inc. v. June Court apartments et al. Resolution: \$7,500. Affirmative Relief (Fair Housing Training; non-discriminatory policy, etc.)
- Settled 19-067: Source of Income. SILO V. June Court Apartments et al. Resolution: \$3,750.
- Settled 19-058: Source of Income. Derrick Feaster v. New Highway Apartments, et al. Resolution: \$2,500.
- Settled 19-048: Race. Long Island Housing Services, Inc., v. Farmingdale Villas; Farmingdale Villas LLC; Sonya M. Alonso; Jerome Genova; Leonard Genova. Resolution: \$25,000; \$10,000 Compensation Fund with HUD for any individuals who may have been discriminated based on race; Affirmative Relief (Fair Housing Training; nondiscriminatory policy, etc).
- Settled 20-019 Felicita Castro V. Cow Bay Housing Development Fund Company, Inc., Cornell Pace Inc., Lyette Arroyo: Complainant a filed a complaint of disability with HUD, which was subsequently referred to NYSDHR. Complainant alleged that she experienced discrimination based upon disability. Resolution: RA Accommodation granted with NYSDHR PDCA.
- **Cases Filed:** Eight (8) cases filed; 4 source of income; 1 disability; 2 cases which related to both source of income & disability cases; 1 breach of PDCA
- Filed 19-033 Long Island Housing Services, Inc. v. HG Realty, et al: This is filed with NYSDHR on the basis of disability and source of income discrimination. LIHS is current waiting for the NYSDHR to draft the conciliation agreement.
- Filed 19-060 Long Island Housing Services, Inc. v. Glen Arms Group, LLC, et al.: This is filed with NYSDHR for breach of conciliation agreement. The original complaint was filed on the basis of disability and source of income.
- Filed 19-055 Long Island Housing Services, Inc. v. The Cassata Organization Family Limited Partnership; Cassata Holding Company, LLC; Oakwood Manor LLC; Rosario S. Cassata, Michele Cassata, Frank R. Cassata, Virginia “Doe”; Lisa “Doe”: This complaint of source of income discrimination is filed with NYSDHR and has been issued a PC determination.
- Filed 19-064 Willie Springfield v. The Cassata Organization Family Limited Partnership; Oakwood Manor LLC; Rosario S. Cassata, Michele Cassata, Frank R. Cassata: This complaint of source of income discrimination is filed with NYSDHR and has been issued a PC determination.
- Filed 19-078 Darlene Marie Vitarelli; Richard Vitarelle Sr.; v. The Cassata Organization Family Limited Partnership; Oakwood Manor LLC; Rosario S. Cassata, Michele Cassata, Frank R. Cassata: This complaint of source of income discrimination is filed with NYSDHR and has been issued a PC determination.
- Filed 19-079 Suffolk Independent Living Organization v. The Cassata Organization Family Limited Partnership; Oakwood Manor, LLC; Rosario S. Cassata, Michele Cassata, Frank R. Cassata, Jennifer “Doe”; Serena “Doe”: This complaint of source of

income and disability discrimination is filed with NYSDHR and has been issued a PC determination.

- Filed 19-085 Joan Paladini v. Town of Oyster Bay Housing Authority; James E. Picken: This complaint of disability is filed with HUD.
- Filed 20-004 LaRae Jones, Joseph Jones v Harold Saunders, Coldwell Banker et al.: This complaint of source of income discrimination is filed with NYSDHR.

- Investigated allegations of unlawful housing discrimination in rentals, sales, lending and advertising cases some resulting in formal enforcement actions;
- Facilitated enforcement services for prima facie complaints with *U.S. Dept. of HUD* and/or the *NYS Division of Human Rights and local Human Rights Commission* after investigations revealed evidence to pursue enforcement,
- Dramatically increased number of housing units accessible to people with disabilities through advocacy services and enforcement efforts to include affirmative relief provisions in the public interest;
- Provided Fair Housing training for staff, government, housing industry, the public, private and non-profit agencies;
- Maintained Fair Housing Enforcement program manager, investigators, and Resource specialist providing counseling services on rental topics and program support;
- Continue to support 1 Full time Fair Housing Staff Attorney, admitted to practice in Federal and NYS Courts;
- Attendance of refresher course by Per Diem Testers on fair housing testing. Access to active pool of Per Diem Testers trained to conduct fair housing testing. Recruited, trained and hired new fair housing testers.

## **Foreclosure Prevention**

July 2019 now seems like a completely different era in the world of Foreclosure Prevention. We were ramping up our Housing Counseling and Legal Services programs after a significant funding gap in April 2019 required us to wind down our services, close our files, and permanently reduced the Foreclosure Prevention staff by 50%. Having to restructure ourselves to be smaller and more resilient, we were now rebuilding our client pipeline of homeowners seeking assistance with their mortgages.

Since March 2020, the Foreclosure Prevention program, as with the Landlord/Tenant counseling program, has been both directly and indirectly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected both the work we do and how we do it.

Responding to the NYS Executive Order issued by Gov. Andrew Cuomo on 3/17, LIHS closed our physical office and began serving our clients remotely. We adopted new working-from-home protocols, instituted best-practices from NYS, CDC, and WHO, and implemented technological solutions in order to keep everyone safe while still striving to meet the changing needs of homeowners (especially those who are not technology-equipped or savvy).

While our virtual offices remained opened, the world around us began to shut down. Our hotline went eerily silent once State and Federal law was put in place to help stabilize housing during the pandemic. Providing much needed protections to both homeowners and renters, moratoria to halt foreclosures and evictions were issued and later extended, and a tapestry of new laws were effected to require mortgage companies to offer forbearances options to homeowners who were financially impacted directly or indirectly by COVID-19.

During this time, our Foreclosure Prevention team quickly adapted our policies in order to continue counseling our existing clients remotely regarding the sudden changes impacting their cases, and to be able to take new clients and counsel them through the evolving quagmire of new mortgage relief options and homeowner protections. We also seized upon the opportunity to modernize our Housing Counseling program by transitioning to a paperless model, which has continued to serve us well.

We responded to the influx of calls on the tenant hotline by reassigning one of our housing counselors to provide rental counseling to Spanish-speaking Landlord/Tenant clients. We are also working with the Nassau County 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct to address complaints that officers have failed to respond to an illegal eviction, and has secured a commitment by both the Police Department and a fellow housing advocate who is a veteran Landlord/Tenant attorney to provide training to the officers on these important changes in NYS law. As of April 2019, it is a Class A Misdemeanor to evict someone illegally, including by shutting off their utilities.

While the pandemic wreaked havoc with our pre-pandemic service goals, we seized upon the opportunity that the disruption presented to pivot toward work we have long-wished to bring into focus – assisting our clients to self-advocate with the banks regarding servicing errors, and file complaints with the regulatory agencies. This important work often took a backseat to the more immediate counseling goals of helping clients apply for loan modifications and settle their foreclosure cases in settlement conference. As anticipated, there have been no shortage of complaints to be filed, and many homeowners who were initially (and often repeatedly) determined to be ineligible would not have the mortgage relief they were entitled to receive.

During this challenging time, we also weathered a protracted funding gap, which began April 2020 and lasted through July 2020, through a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. Having kept our Foreclosure Prevention program intact, our skilled housing counselors and attorneys remained ready to assist homeowners as they come out of their forbearances.

## **Tenant's Rights**

Provided assistance to **192** clients seeking Tenant's Rights counseling and provided screening for Fair Housing violations and First Time Homebuyer services.

#### Landlord-Tenant Success story 1: MS

Client is age 84 and lives in a complex. She has lived in the apartment for 4 years and signed another 2-year lease recently. She has had a lot of trouble with the door leading into her apartment that houses 8 apartments. One week she got locked out of the building with just her apartment key and she was cold outside. She went to maintenance for help, and someone helped her to get into the building, and he had to use a crowbar. The client had called corporate and the person who she spoke to was not helpful and mean to her. Our Housing Counselor called the complex on the client's behalf to work on a solution. The complex called the client the next morning within a few days the maintenance person came and had to shave the door and tighten the hinge. The door worked great after that, and the client wrote a letter to thank us.

#### Landlord-Tenant Success story 2: EL

Client is age 67 living in Long Beach N.Y., homeless, and a single mother of twins in high school, divorced, and a victim of domestic violence. She only gets SS income, which is very low. She was living in shelters, and in motels. Our Housing Counselor helped navigate her to receive SNAP benefits, which had been denied or lapsed over a period of time. The twins were going to graduate soon, and they both received full scholarships at SUNY at Stony Brook College. They needed to find affordable housing in a very short time. I was able to connect them to the Safe Center re-rapid housing program through Safe Horizons with the help of the LI Coalition for the Homeless. We had to work it out with the college so they would hold the scholarship for another semester, as housing could not be secured in time to start in the fall. The college agreed to do this.

They found a rental home near the college, and the twins were able to start school the following semester. Our Housing Counselor also gave them some resources as they had bare minimum furniture, and other household items. St. Vincent DePaul was going to supply them with beds and blankets. Our Housing Counselor also had an organization drop off a gift card for Thanksgiving and a turkey dinner to them for their first Thanksgiving in their new rental, as they do not have a car. It was a long 2-year battle, but they are no longer homeless.

#### Landlord-Tenant Services Provided:

- **62** clients were given information on eviction, before the court process took place.
- **33** clients were given non-legal information on lease questions
- **10** clients were screened for housing discrimination, and forwarded to the Fair Housing Dept. at LIHS
- **8** clients were given information about how to solve not having hot water in their apt
- **6** clients living in a shelter were given resources to secure housing, and other needed help
- **100** clients were looking for housing resources, and help with a security dep. or first month's rent
- **15** clients needed info on emergency housing
- **1** client needed help after receiving a 14-day notice to vacate

- **28** clients living in a private home rental that was being sold were given information on their tenant's rights concerning the eviction process and move out process

## **LIHS Advocacy documents**

LIHS has filed or signed on to the following documents demanding action to further fair housing:

- [Francis v. Kings Park Amicus Brief](#), Court of Appeals of the Second Circuit, 15-1823, May 8, 2020
- [LIHS comment 2020 proposed AFFH reg 030620 \(pdf\)](#)
- [HR 149 Sign On Support Letter Feb 26, 2020 \(pdf\)](#)
- [New York State Legislature budget testimony Foreclosure Prevention funding 010420 \(pdf\)](#)
- [Joint Fair Housing Agency letter to New York Governor 013020 \(pdf\)](#)  
[Community Organizations Urge FDIC To Not Join Flawed Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Community Reinvestment Act](#), December 11, 2019(pdf)  
[Letter urging presidential debate moderators to ask the candidates about their proposed solutions to the affordable housing crisis](#), December 10, 2019 (link)
- [LIHS 2018-08-20 HUD Disparate Impact ANPR Comment 8/20/19 \(pdf\)](#)
- [LIHS Memorandum of Support: A Fair Process for Reducing Erroneous Welfare Sanctions Should Apply Statewide A.2455-a \(Hunter\)/S.3840-a \(May\) August 5, 2019 \(pdf\)](#)
- [LIHS HUD Mixed-Status Family Comments HUD Docket No. FR-6124-P-01, RIN 2501-AD89, 070519 \(pdf\)](#)

## **LIHS in the News**

- [Housing Advocates Petition Lamont To Extend Eviction Moratorium](#), WSHU radio, June 26, 2020
- [List of resources available on Long Island for those who need financial, legal help](#), Newsday, June 23, 2020
- [HUD Approves \\$35,000 Settlement Resolving Claims of Racial Discrimination at New York Apartment Complex](#), HUD Press Release, June 19, 2020 ([Conciliation Agreement PDF](#))
- [AG announces \\$4.5M grant to tackle discriminatory housing practices; improve NY housing stock](#), Albany Times-Union, May 11, 2020
- [Continue to press against housing bias on Long Island](#), Newsday Editorial, May 10, 2020
- [Hempstead leaves housing aid unspent despite thousands on waitlist](#), Newsday, May 10, 2020
- [Grant money for LI Housing Services to fight discrimination](#), Long Island Business News, May 7, 2020



- [LI Housing Services to get funding for fair-housing enforcement](#), Newsday, May 6, 2020
- [Real Estate Investing with Andrew Lieb](#), May 3, 2020 12pm to 1pm [WRCN 103.9FM](#) and [Podcast](#)
- Corona Virus' Effect on Housing, [Progressive Solutions with Ahmad Ali](#), WUSB, April 7, 2020
- [NY can help homeowners — and save money](#), Newsday, March 31, 2020
- [Realtors' group to roll out changes to fight housing discrimination](#), Newsday, January 17, 2020
- [Ben Carson's HUD will propose new rule, further weakening enforcement of fair housing laws](#), Newsday, January 3, 2020
- [New state rules to combat housing discrimination in wake of Newsday series](#), Newsday, December 16, 2019
- [Groups Take Up Housing Issues, Huntington Now](#), December 12, 2019
- [State needs to enforce existing laws to fight housing discrimination, activists say](#), Newsday, December 11, 2019
- [Long Island Lawmakers Unveil Plan To Fight Rampant Housing Discrimination After Explosive Investigation](#), CBS News, November 22, 2019
- [Urban League seeks probe of LI real estate agents](#), Newsday, November 19, 2019
- [Long Island Divided: Why Agents Steer](#), Newsday, November 17, 2019
- [Long Island Divided: The challenges facing enforcement](#), Newsday, November 17, 2019
- Fair Housing Update, [Air Ali](#) & [Progressive solutions](#), [WUSB 90.1 FM](#) 10am-2pm, October 22, 2019
- [8 tips for LIers thinking of buying a house to rent out](#), Newsday, November 8, 2019

## **FY 20 Final Budget vs. Actual Narrative**

Contract income was slightly lower than budgeted due to a gap in HOPP for the last quarter of the fiscal year. Donations were higher than budgeted, due to a private restricted donation for Foreclosure Legal Services early in the fiscal year. The agency was able to secure a PPP Loan which we expect to be forgiven, which helped us bridge the gap in HOPP funding, as well as reallocate some income towards the increased equipment and IT expenses we incurred when switching to remote work. Other expenses were expended as expected. As we work to fully fund each program, we add to reserve accounts to better position our agency to deal with future funding disruptions. We hope to slowly build funds for **reserves**, money to make large organizational changes called **change capital**, and additions to our **fixed assets** that are difficult to build into annual and grant budgets. This year, after grant income is deferred to FY21 for use where appropriate, we can add **\$24,475** in our reserve fund.



Budget vs. Actuals: FY 20 - FY20 P&L  
July 2019 - June 2020

	Actual	Budget	over/(under) Budget	% of Budget
<b>Revenue</b>				
4000-02 CONTRACTS	930,457	1,067,075	(136,618)	87%
4000-PPP	51,431	-	51,431	
4000-43 CONTRIBUTIONS INCOME	78,550	-	78,550	
4000-51 DONATIONS	27,372	20,000	7,372	137%
4000-52 GALA	26,062	60,000	(33,938)	43%
4000-56 INTEREST	3,691	2,500	1,191	148%
4000-59 MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	2,525	-	2,525	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,120,088</b>	<b>1,149,575</b>	<b>(29,487)</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
5000-01 SALARIES AND WAGES	676,332	677,879	(1,547)	100%
5000-02 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	143,066	136,186	6,880	105%
5000-03 DEPRECIATION EXPENSE	2,651	2,000	651	133%
5000-04 BANK SERVICE CHARGES	39		39	
5000-05 EQUIPMENT	19,246	14,000	5,246	137%
5000-14 EVENTS/OUTREACH	7,161	14,650	(7,489)	49%
5000-15 INSURANCE	8,675	9,967	(1,292)	87%
5000-26 MISCELLANEOUS	2,395	2,000	395	120%
5000-81 UTILITIES	7,788	6,800	988	115%
5000-85 POSTAGE	3,212	2,000	1,212	161%
5000-87 PRINTING	3,615	3,000	615	120%
5000-88 PROFESSIONAL FEES	114,927	33,400	81,527	344%
5000-99 PUBLICATIONS, SUBSCRIPTIONS, DUES	9,530	14,500	(4,970)	66%
5100-08 RENT	69,525	96,300	(26,775)	72%
5100-34 SUPPLIES	14,534	9,500	5,034	153%
5100-37 TRAVEL	12,915	22,250	(9,335)	58%
5200-1 RESERVES	24,475	28,775	(4,300)	85%
5200-2 CHANGE CAPITAL	-	14,387	(14,387)	0%
5200-3 FIXED ASSET ADDITIONS	-	14,387	(14,387)	0%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>1,120,087</b>	<b>1,101,981</b>	<b>18,106</b>	<b>102%</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>47,594</b>	<b>(47,594)</b>	