

## **Merrimac Housing Authority Tenant-On-Tenant Harassment Policy & Procedures**

The Merrimac Housing Authority (MHA) will not tolerate harassment by or of any applicant, tenant, resident, or visitor on the basis of a person's actual or perceived membership in a protected class (or association with such person). Harassing conduct by a tenant will result in action up to and including eviction.

The conduct covered by this policy includes behavior, language, property damage, or writings based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, disability or sexual orientation which can create an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive housing environment for residents or visitors.

Harassment based on religion, ethnicity or race includes the use of degrading, demeaning, insulting, abusive or threatening language which relates to a person's race, ethnicity or religion; graffiti, property damage, slogans or other visual displays which contain racial, ethnic or religious-based slurs or insults; demeaning remarks, jokes or gestures based on race, ethnic origin or religion; or racial, ethnic or religious stereotypes.

Such behavior directed at a resident or visitor because of their membership in a protected class or association with someone who is a member of a protected class, is unlawful under federal and Massachusetts anti-discrimination laws. These laws protect residents' use and quiet enjoyment of their apartments and the common areas and facilities at Merrimac Housing Authority properties. Any tenant who believes that he or she is being harassed should promptly report the behavior to the Housing Manager who will promptly investigate any report related to tenant-on-tenant harassment. The tenant has the right to request a transfer under MHA's transfer policy.

Any MHA staff member who witnesses or becomes aware of tenant on tenant harassment as described in this policy shall immediately report such harassment to the State Housing Administrator or the Executive Director.

Complaints may also be filed with the **Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination**, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (617) 994-6000 or the **United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Fair Housing Hub**, Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building, 10 Causeway Street, Room 321 Boston, MA 02222 (617) 565-5308.