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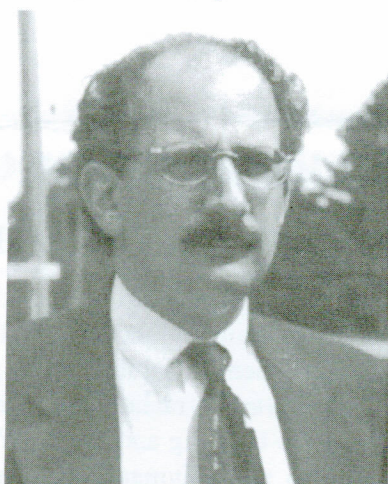
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## Two Michigan men collect \$20,000 settlement from Ann Arbor landlords in sex discrimination case

Two Michigan men, Shannon Moody and Robert Stowe, accepted \$20,000 in September to settle their federal sex discrimination lawsuit against a pair of Ann Arbor landlords. According to the suit, Roland and Joan Frey refused to rent their Potter Avenue apartment to the two men because of their sex.

Moody and Stowe contacted the Fair Housing Center (FHC) of Washtenaw County to report the incident of discrimination. The Center dispatched male and female testers to the site to corroborate the men's story. Tests supported the claim of discrimination based on sex. The Freys allegedly refused to allow male testers to rent the apartment but did offer the apartment to female testers. The testing for the Moody and Stowe complaint was funded by a contract with Washtenaw County.



**Steve Tomkowiak represented Shannon Moody and Robert Stowe in their sex discrimination case against two Ann Arbor landlords.**

In response to their offer, the Freys, through their attorney, offered the men \$100 to settle the case. "At that point, we realized we had to go to court," said Moody.

Filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, the case was assigned to Judge George Caram Steeh. Fair Housing Center Cooperating Attorney Steve Tomkowiak represented Moody and Stowe in the case. This was the first time the Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County has ~~used~~ men in a claim of sex discrimination under the Federal Fair Housing Act.

### Landlords didn't take claim seriously

"The property owners and their attorneys did not take this fair housing claim seriously and in the end it cost them," said Pamela A. Kisch, Executive Director of the Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County.

The Fair Housing Center is a private non-profit organization working to provide fair housing testing, investigation, advice, advocacy, education and attorney referral to those who believe they have been denied housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sex, familial status, marital status, age, sexual orientation, source of income, and/or student status. The FHC recently announced that it is expanding its service area to cover Lenawee County and Monroe County in Michigan. The Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County will also change its name to the Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan.

### Men attempted to settle claims before going to court

When Stowe and Moody reported the discriminatory actions of the Freys to the FHC, they initially asked the agency's staff to resolve the case without litigation. During pre-litigation mediation attempts, Stowe and Moody offered to accept \$4,000 to settle their fair housing claims.

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