

APARTMENT
DISCRIMINATION
IN
BALTIMORE COUNTY AND CITY

1977 - 78

FOLLOW-UP TO
1972 APARTMENT AUDIT

published by;

Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc.
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Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. (BNI) is a private, non-profit civil rights agency organized in 1959 working for viable interracial communities, fair housing, and tenants' rights in the Baltimore Metropolitan area.

One part of BNI's program activity is the handling of housing discrimination complaints and the monitoring of the local housing industry for compliance with fair housing laws.

Fair housing IS and HAS BEEN the law of the land since Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an 1866 Civil Rights Act which proclaimed:

All citizens of the United States shall have the same right, in every state and territory, as is enjoyed by white citizens thereof to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property.

Therefore, "all racial discrimination, private as well as public, in the sale or rental of property" is prohibited.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks not only to the testers who participated in this apartment audit but also to Paul Knefel, a Vista Volunteer, who did most of the ground work and helped see the audit through to completion. Appreciation must also be noted for the compilation of this report by Carolyn Boitnott, Testing and Compliance Committee Chairperson and Don Miller, Associate Director of BNI.

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SUMMARY

From October 1977 to April 1978, Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. conducted an audit of 51 randomly selected apartments in the metropolitan area. Overall, a Difference of Treatment of Blacks was found in 39% of the apartment complexes tested.

PURPOSE

This audit was conducted to determine if there has been a decrease in discriminatory treatment against Blacks as reported in a similar audit conducted by Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. in 1972. (Appendix A)

METHOD

Apartment Selection Process--From various sources Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. compiled two separate lists totaling over 650 apartment complexes. One list contained Baltimore City apartment complexes and the other, Baltimore County (Appendix B). Eliminated from consideration were those complexes operated or regulated by a government agency (i.e. public housing and HUD subsidized apartments), those under 30 units in size, those having a majority Black population, co-ops, condominiums, and student housing units. Those remaining on each list were placed in alphabetical order and then numbered sequentially. Fifty numbers from each of the two lists were selected at random using a table of random numbers. It was intended that the study would cover these 100 apartment complexes. However, it was found that nearly half of these complexes were not open on the weekends. By selecting only those apartment complexes where rental offices are open on weekends the results are possibly understating the amount of discrimination. Of the 51 complexes, 49 were successfully tested. (Appendix C gives size and price range)

Participants--Approximately 50 White testers and 40 Black testers formed 24 and 21 pairs respectively with each pair testing from one to six complexes.

Testing Procedures--Each apartment complex was assigned to a Black pair and a White pair of trained testers. Each of these sets was given identical backgrounds in terms of income, type of apartment, when desired, and by whom it was to be occupied. Testers visited the apartment complex within the hour of each other. Immediately after testing the complex each pair completed a report form to insure all pertinent information was documented in a comparable fashion (Appendix D). With the exception of two complexes all tests were completed and counted in this report. The two complexes unsuccessfully tested were not considered because in one instance the pairs inadvertently asked for different types of apartment units, and in the other one pair was unable to fulfill its assignment.

Geographic Distribution--The geographic distribution of the developments both by number of complexes and by number of units (impact) is shown in Table I.

TABLE I
Summary of Geographic Distribution
of 49 completed tests

	<u>Apartment Complexes</u>	<u>Apartment Dwelling Units</u>
Baltimore County	31 (63%)	11,013 (71%)
Baltimore City	18 (37%)	4,424 (29%)
Total:	49 (100%)	15,437 (100%)

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In the 49 completed tests of apartment complexes four categories of Difference of Treatment were found: (Appendix E gives some specific examples)

1. Rental agent displayed a less satisfactory demeanor (includes amount and manner in which information was given) toward Black testers. (18% by number of complexes). In two of the complexes tested, the agent made derogatory comments about Blacks to the White testers.
2. Rental agent indicated earlier availability to White testers (12% by number of complexes).
3. Rental agent made economic inquiries of Black testers and not of White testers (2% by number of complexes).
4. Agent showed different apartment units to each pair and/or gave different addresses of available apartment units or referred to different apartment complexes--raising the question of "racial" steering within or outside of the apartment complex tested (16% by number of complexes).

Table II shows geographic distribution of Difference of Treatment combining all four categories above. (Appendix F)

TABLE II
Summary of Difference of Treatment

	<u>Apartment Complexes</u>	<u>Difference of Treatment</u>
Baltimore County	31 (63%)	11 (35%)
Baltimore City	18 (37%)	8 (44%)
Total:	49 (100%)	19 (39%)

	<u>Apartment Dwelling units (impact)</u>	<u>Difference of Treatment</u>
Baltimore County	11,013 (71%)	3,618 (33%)
Baltimore City	4,424 (29%)	2,277 (51%)
Total:	15,437 (100%)	5,895 (38%)

Table III below shows a comparison between kinds of Difference of Treatment in 1972 and 1978.

TABLE III
Comparison to the 1972 Audit

	<u>Number of Complexes</u>		<u>Number of Apt. Dwelling units (impact)</u>	
	<u>1972</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1978</u>
Overall Difference of Treatment	49%	39%	53%	38%
Less Satisfactory Demeanor	29%	18%	23%	21%
Earlier Availability	22%	12%	26%	12%
Economic Inquiry	27%	2%	25%	2%
Possible racial steering	-- *	16%	-- *	16%

*Racial steering was not considered in the 1972 Audit.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Presence of the Equal Housing Opportunity Sign--Federal law requires the Department of Housing and Urban Development's EHO poster to be posted (Appendix G) in all rental and real estate offices. During the audit testers were asked to check for the presence of the poster. Table IV shows the degree to which the complexes were in compliance.

TABLE IV

Presence of EHO Poster

	<u>Baltimore City</u>	<u>Baltimore County</u>	<u>Total</u>
Sign posted	6 (33%)	15 (48%)	21 (43%)
No sign	11 (61%)	16 (52%)	27 (55%)
Unknown	1 (6%)	-- (--)	1 (2%)
Total:	18 (100%)	31 (100%)	49 (100%)

CONCLUSION

Difference of Treatment of potential apartment seekers by race is still widely practiced in the metropolitan area. However, the degree is somewhat improved--39% compared with 49% in 1972. The Difference of Treatment and/or discriminatory discouragement which still occurs seems to be more subtle as most Black testers felt they could have obtained an apartment in the complexes tested; it was only in comparing the treatment and/or information given Blacks and Whites that the differences were found.

Although difficult to compare because of the different manners in which they were conducted, this recent BNI audit is not inconsistent with HUD's release in April of preliminary information on a nationwide audit of discrimination in housing (40 different metropolitan areas but not the Baltimore area). The preliminary information from the HUD audit as to apartment testing indicates: 49.4% White favored response, 30.3% equal treatment and 20.3% Black favored response. HUD subtracted 20.3% from 49.4% to come up with a 29.1% level of discrimination. BNI used extensive lists of apartment complexes, eliminating predominately Black complexes from its audit base, while HUD tested apartment complexes that advertised. BNI found only one incident of a Black favored response.

Footnote to National Fair Housing Audit:

A national audit of real estate offices and apartment complexes was conducted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development from June to July 1977, in 40 metropolitan areas across the country at a cost of one million dollars with 300 Black and 300 White testers participating. Some 1609 tests were made of rental properties and 1655 tests of sale housing. This represents HUD's preliminary results. HUD is in the process of computerizing the results and over the next six months will release specific reports covering varying aspects of the audit.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1972 Apartment Audit

Summary

Under the auspices of Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc., a study was conducted in February and March, 1972 to evaluate racial discrimination as practiced by apartment developments in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. A random selection of 93 developments which included a wide range of locations, sizes and rental costs was tested by 45 bi-racial teams. These tests indicated that Blacks will encounter in the total of all categories tested, even prior to making an application, a pattern of discriminatory discouragement 45 to 55 per cent of the time. The study correlates these various forms of discrimination with location, size and rental.

Conclusion

Discrimination exists and is practiced extensively among rental agents throughout the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. Discrimination is both overt and subtle; varies with economic level, development size and geographic location; and represents violations of the spirit if not the letter of Federal and local law. On the basis of this sample the report indicates that the Black person who attempts to rent a unit in a predominately White apartment complex has 1 chance out of 2 in the City, and 3 chances out of 5 in the County, of encountering discriminatory discouragement. "Seeing" an apartment is only the first step toward occupancy. Further opportunity to discriminate is possible in the processing of the application.

APPENDIX B

SOURCES OF BALTIMORE COUNTY AND CITY APARTMENT COMPLEX LISTS

1. Baltimore City and Baltimore County
Stewart Directories, 1977 Edition
2. Metropolitan Baltimore Apartment and
New Home Guide, May-July, 1977
3. Baltimore Metropolitan Area Telephone
Directory, November, 1977
4. Baltimore City Yellow Pages, June, 1977
5. Baltimore Suburban East and West
Telephone Directory, February, 1977
6. Baltimore County Office of Planning
Zoning

APPENDIX C

SIZE AND PRICE RANGE OF APARTMENT
COMPLEXES TESTED

Area	No. of Dwelling Units per Complex	Price for 2 Bedroom Unit
Baltimore County	74 - 876	\$181 - 347
Baltimore City	80 - 667	\$174 - 410
Over all	74 - 876 units	\$174 - 410

Test # _____
Rep # _____BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.
32 West 25th Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218
243-6007

Apt Testing - Page 2

APARTMENT TESTING RECORD

PLEASE PRINT

Date of Visit: _____ Apt located in: City _____ Harford _____
Time of Arrival: _____ Balto. Co. _____ Howard _____
Time of Departure: _____ AA Co _____ Other _____

APARTMENT COMPLEX TESTED

Rental Office address: _____ Apt # _____

(check here _____ if rental office is not on site of complex interested in
and give name of office at another complex: _____)TESTED Name: _____ Race _____ Home Phone _____
Address _____ Zip _____ Work Phone _____WITNESS: _____ Race _____ Home Phone _____
Address _____ Zip _____ Work Phone _____

ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

1. Type of apt. to request: _____
2. When Apt. is wanted _____
3. Apt. to be occupied by: _____
4. INCOME before taxes: (Note - most rental companies require weekly salary,
before taxes, to equal the monthly rent.)

a) IF MARRIED:

Husband .. every 2 weeks \$ _____ year \$ _____

Wife .. every 2 weeks \$ _____ year \$ _____

Combined Income \$ _____ year \$ _____

b) IF SINGLE OR OTHER:

.. every 2 weeks \$ _____ year \$ _____

BEFORE ENTERING RENTAL OFFICE

Was there a sign at the complex entrance? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, describe the wording on the sign and include any reference to
equal housing opportunity.

Sign description:

INSIDE RENTAL OFFICE

1. Name employee(s) who helped you: _____

_____ Black _____ White

Name was: _____ Volunteered _____ Had to ask

Give Physical description include clothing worn: _____

2. Describe reception upon entering the office and/or model: _____

3. Was there a model apt to be seen: _____ Yes _____ No

Did you see a model apt. _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, describe what was seen? _____

4. HUD's Equal Housing Opportunity poster was _____ (was not _____) posted. If yes,
-
- describe where it was posted and if in a "prominent or conspicuous" place.)

APARTMENT AVAILABILITY

(should be same as assignment info.)

Type of apt requested by tester: _____

When wanted: _____

To be occupied by: _____

1. Number of apts and address of apts available and dates of availability:

Type of Apt	Monthly Rate	Street Addresses and APT Numbers	When Available

2. Of the apts available, or becoming available, as stated above, which ones
-
- were actually seen by you? What was there condition?

RENTAL INFORMATION

1. Length of lease _____
2. Security deposit is _____ (is not _____) required. If, yes, explain what smallest amount
would be acceptable with application: _____
3. Utilities are _____ (are not _____) included in rent. If not included in rent what is
the estimated monthly costs _____
4. Brochures available: _____ Yes _____ No
offered: _____ Yes _____ No
received upon request: _____ Yes _____ No

(Attach brochures to this form)

QUESTIONS ASKED BY AGENT

Did agent ask questions regarding your family size, place and length of employment, salary, other? If yes, state what was asked and answer you gave. (If no question check here)

INFORMATION OFFERED BY AGENT

State what information was offered by agent without you asking. (If no information offered check here)

TESTER ASKED

State what information you asked for:

TREATMENT

Describe treatment given by agent:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very friendly and Courteous | <input type="checkbox"/> Polite but not overly friendly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly and Courteous | <input type="checkbox"/> Cool and distant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exp:ain</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Discourteous |

OTHER

1. Guest Book Available: Yes No / Did you sign: Yes No
 Did agent request you to sign: Yes No If signed explain what was written:

2. Business Card Available: Yes No
 offered: Yes No
 received upon request: Yes No
 (Attach card to this form)

3. Did agent ask for your name: Yes No
 address: Yes No
 phone: Yes No

4. OTHER COMMENTS:

(tester) _____

I hereby certify that
 this day of
 the statements herein are true.

personally appeared before me
 and made oath in due form of law that

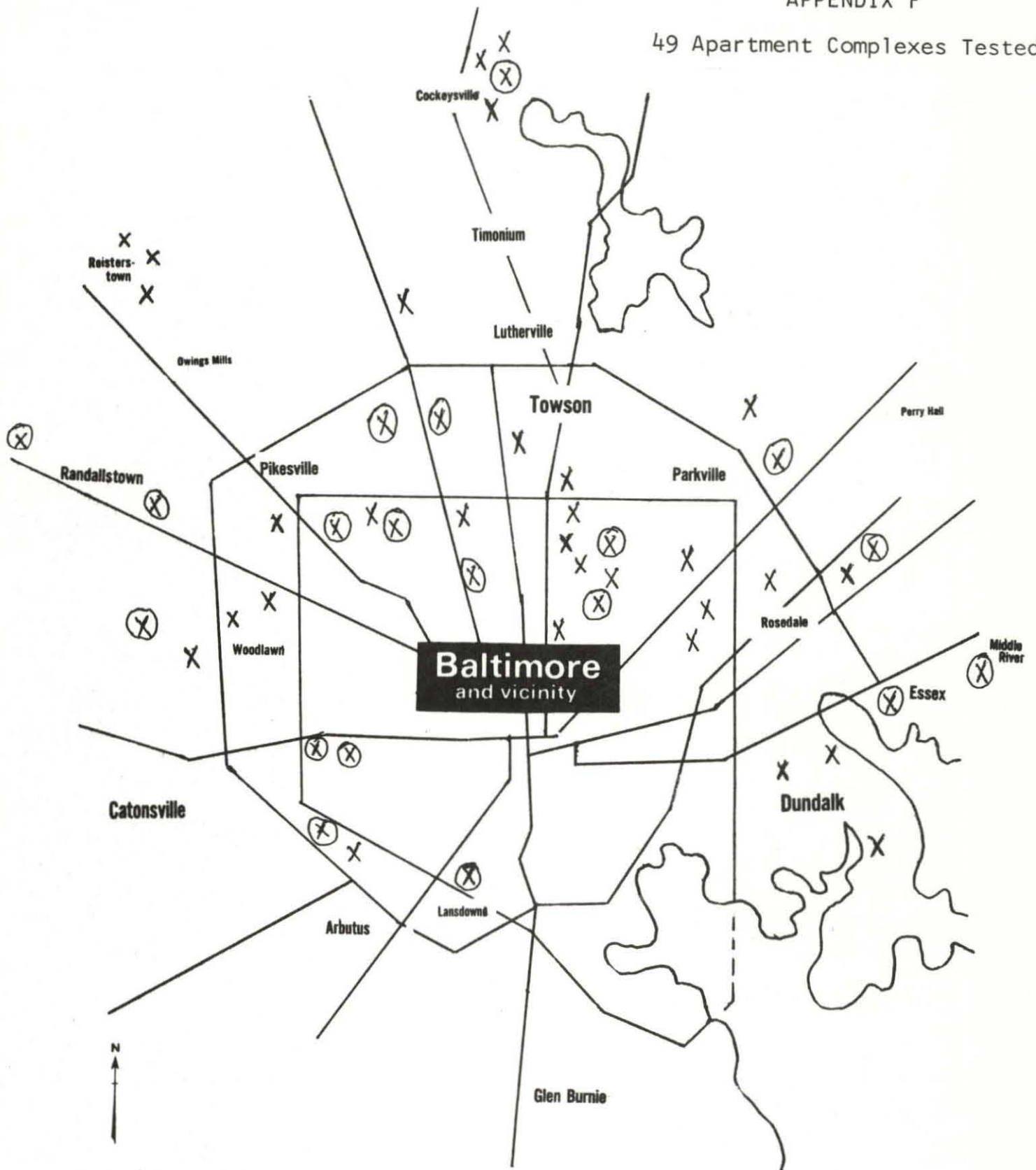
WITNESS my hand and official seal.

(seal)

APPENDIX E

DIFFERENCE OF TREATMENT (Some Examples)

- White team told of an apartment available on December 1. Black team told that nothing was available and the agent suggested they call back and check in December.
- White team was shown vacant apartment and agent made derogatory comments about Blacks. Black team was not shown vacant apartment.
- White team was shown vacant apartment and name was taken by agent. Black team was not shown vacant apartment and name was not taken.
- White team was told nothing was available in garden type apartment, but that there was a vacancy in the high-rise. Black team was told of availability in garden type; the high-rise was only mentioned after a White person inquired during the Black team's visit.
- White team was told of availability, no questions were asked about income and no referrals were made to other complexes. Black team was given a later availability date, and was asked about income and told they might want to check at another named complex.
- No apartment was available for either team, however, the White team was told that they maintained a long waiting list which allowed them to pick and choose their tenants. The agent also referred to other complexes which allowed all sorts of people in - "drug addicts, Blacks, Chinese."



CODE:

⊗ = Difference of Treatment, i.e. discrimination

X = no discrimination



**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**

We Do Business in Accordance With the Federal Fair Housing Law

(Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as Amended by
the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974)

**IT IS ILLEGAL TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST
ANY PERSON BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR,
RELIGION, SEX, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN**

- In the sale or rental of housing or residential lots
- In advertising the sale or rental of housing
- In the financing of housing
- In the provision of real estate brokerage services

Blockbusting is also illegal

An aggrieved person may file a complaint of a housing discrimination act with the:

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Washington, D.C. 20410**