

EHOC's 2021 Annual Impact Report

*Celebrating 30
years of fighting
against housing
discrimination!*



www.ehocstl.org

Metropolitan St. Louis

Equal Housing & Opportunity Council

(314) 534-5800

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OUR MISSION

To ensure equal access to housing and places of public accommodation for all people



A Letter from Our Executive Director

We are both excited and cautious as EHOC expands our programming to be even more responsive to the immediate needs of our community in wake of recent economic changes due to the pandemic.

Over the past 30 years, EHOC has primarily operated as a Fair Housing organization. At its inception, EHOC provided essential advocacy and testing to uncover and address violations of the Fair Housing Act with a team of five people. Today, we help thousands of people all over the Metropolitan area with evictions, addressing environmental justice issues, landlord-tenant disputes, and legal assistance for renters with over 14 staff members.

Temporary government funding has allowed us to more than double our staff with attorneys and client advocates. However, the long-term cost of employee health insurance, inflation administration, overhead and competitive salaries isn't sustainable without generous unrestricted funding.

That is where you come in, by supporting EHOC you can make a difference in our ability to chip away at systemic segregation and discrimination in the Metropolitan St. Louis region at the same time as stabilizing families in crisis in the Metro area. Your gifts will allow us to provide living wages to our staff and give long-term stability to our programming. Thank you in advance for your gifts, endowments, bequeaths, and priceless prayers/thoughts for our continued success in our Mission of equity in housing, economic opportunity, and family wholeness.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Jordan', is positioned above the printed name.

Will Jordan, Executive Director

About EHOC

The Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council (EHOC) seeks to ensure equal access to housing and places of public accommodation for all people through education, counseling, investigation, and enforcement.

Founded in 1992, EHOC is the only private, not-for-profit fair housing enforcement agency working to end illegal housing discrimination in the Metropolitan St. Louis area. We operate throughout Missouri and Illinois.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to highlight EHOC's key moments in 2021 in fighting against housing discrimination.

We hope this report shines a light on the work locally in St. Louis, MO, as we join forces with the community to eradicate housing discrimination.

Staff

Ch. Will Jordan, Executive Director

Kalila Jackson, Director of Legal Services/Senior Staff Attorney

Katina Combs, Testing Director

Marissa Cohen, Director of Education, Outreach, and Advocacy

Niya Foster, Fair Housing Specialist

Glenn Burleigh, Community Engagement Specialist

Malissa Shaw, Centreville Program Assistant

Kara Duncan, Business/Program Manager

Eviction Defense Program (EDP).

Thomas Pearson, Staff Attorney

Ellie Stitzer, Legal Fellow

Kennedy Moehrs Gardner, Staff Attorney

Keith Rose, Paralegal/ Program Specialist

Melissa Pashia, Housing Resource Manager

Clarice Lipsey, Tenant Advocate

Rachel Bowie, Intake Specialist

Emma Grady-Pawl, Intake Specialist

Mintha Thomas, Intake Specialist

Board of Directors

Nate Johnson (President)

Dennis Lavallee (Vice President)

Vernon Mitchell

Aimee Wehmeier (Treasurer)

Gail Brown

Eric Madkins (Secretary)

Ed Wartts

Valerie Bell

Valerie Marion

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Zachary Schmook

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OUR 2021 IMPACT!

In 2021, EHOC....

**ASSISTED 1,124 CLIENTS
WITH HOUSING ISSUES**

**includes eviction prevention,
landlord/tenant and Fair Housing intakes**

**Distributed approximately
\$45,000 in rental assistance
funds to clients in the City of
St. Louis in order to maintain
or obtain stable housing**



**EHOC conducted 60
Fair Housing
workshops,
educating a total of
607 community
members and
partners**



**EHOC provided legal
information and self-advocacy
specific to eviction defense for
460 tenants facing eviction or
at risk of eviction**

“



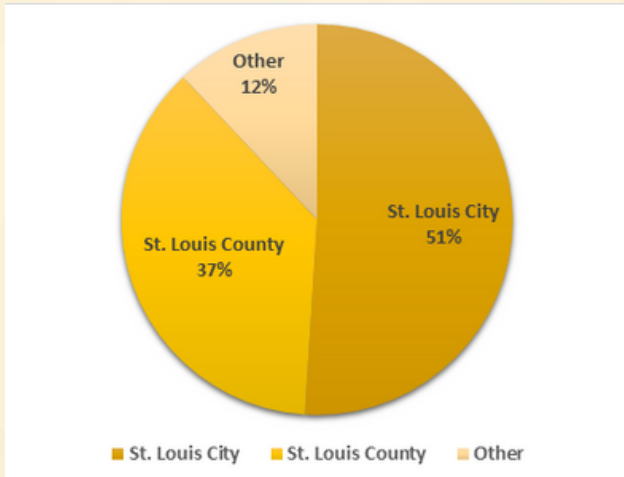
A pie chart illustrating the distribution of housing types. The chart is divided into two segments: a larger light orange segment representing 'Landlord Tenant' at 57%, and a smaller dark orange segment representing 'Fair Housing' at 43%. A legend at the bottom identifies the colors: dark orange for 'Fair Housing' and light orange for 'Landlord Tenant'.

Housing Type	Percentage
Fair Housing	43%
Landlord Tenant	57%

WHO DO WE SERVE?

When contacting EHOC, callers choose if the call is related to housing discrimination, a landlord-tenant issue, or a threat of eviction. Often, people calling for landlord-tenant issues may also unknowingly be facing housing discrimination.

St. Louis City vs. St. Louis County

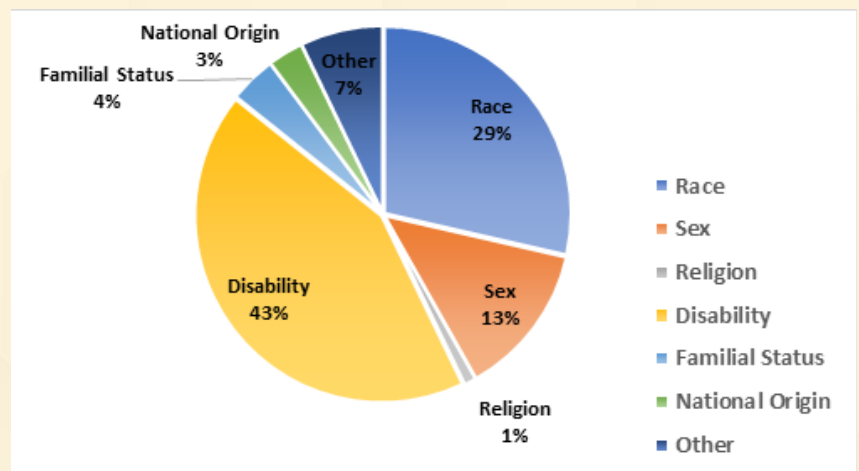


EHOC operates throughout the Metropolitan St. Louis area. In 2021, over half of the calls were from St. Louis City and County. The "other" callers were from surrounding counties like Jefferson County(2%), St. Charles County (4%), and others like Madison County, and St.Clair County.

Calls from the discrimination hotline are categorized by **the type of complaint based on the seven federally protected classes**; Race, Color, National Origin, Religion, Sex (gender Identity and sexual orientation), Disability, and Family status.

Disability and race discrimination remain **the top complaints** received **locally and nationwide**.

Fair Housing Complaints by the Protected Classes



How were they connected to EHOC?

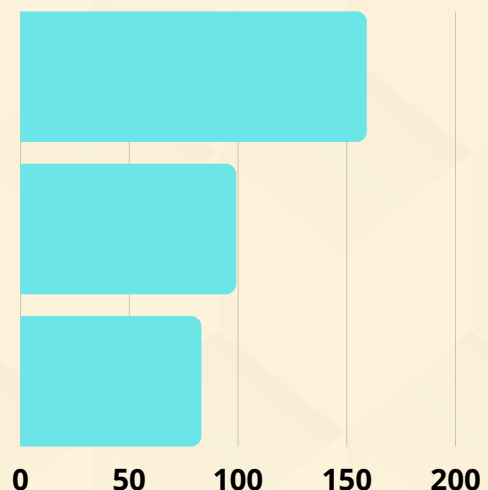


Our community partnerships are an important aspect of our work! **The majority of our clients in 2021 were referred through community agencies!**

Referral by community agency

Internet search

Family/Friends



COUNSELING: DISCRIMINATION AND LANDLORD TENANT HOTLINE

Our counseling program focuses on **educating and empowering callers** to know their rights and **use self-advocacy tools** with their landlords/housing providers.

In some cases, the staff attorney may represent the caller facing housing discrimination. In other instances, we may assist the caller with filing the complaint with HUD or with a state or local agency such as The St. Louis City Civil Rights Enforcement Agency (CREA).



Success Stories



Fair Housing for People with Disabilities

In 2021 EHOC received a call from a resident of **Lincoln County MO**, that identified as **a person with a disability**. Prior to calling, he made multiple requests to his landlord for a handicapped parking spot due to mobility issues. After months of asking and not seeing any results, **he contacted EHOC in October 2021** and explained the obstacles he faced while accessing his home; e.g. uneven ground, loose gravel, and no handrails in common areas. After our enforcement team spoke with him, they informed him of his Fair Housing rights and wrote a letter to the landlord on his behalf. Under the Fair Housing Act, housing providers must allow **reasonable accommodations and modifications* for a person with a disability**.

The letter requested a **reasonable accommodation for a handicapped parking spot and to install handrails**. A month later, EHOC received a call from the landlord stating both requests were granted and completed. After following up with the caller to confirm, the case was successfully closed with a positive outcome!

**The landlord may deny a request that creates an unreasonable administrative or financial burden, but must offer other alternatives to accommodate the individual.*

Investigations & Testing

Testing Program Highlights



**EHOC
conducted
tests in 2021**

55

**EHOC recruited
Volunteer
testers in 2021**

23



EHOC's Investigation Department

helps show where discrimination is happening toward a specific protected class by conducting investigations in response to complaints and, systemic investigations to proactively prevent housing discrimination from occurring.

The Testing Program is a method used to uncover housing discrimination. This method uses a controlled procedure to expose differential treatment in the quality, content, and amount of information or services given to home-seekers by landlords, real estate agents, leasing agents, and lenders. **Volunteer testers are also compensated for their time.**



Help us expand our reach by signing up to become a tester!!

Testers must be 21 years or older, able to pass a criminal background check, have reliable transportation, and have great writing skills. Reasonable accommodations are made for testers with disabilities. Testers of all backgrounds are needed.

**Contact Katina Combs, Testing Director, if you are
interested in becoming a tester.
testing@ehoc-stl.org**

INVESTIGATION SUCCESS STORY!

Fair Housing and Accessibility

In March of 2020, after a survey of newly built apartment buildings in St. Louis, EHOC filed a complaint with HUD because of numerous accessibility issues with the Grand Flats development. Examples of the accessibility issues spotted included the lack of required accessible parking spaces and numerous inaccessible amenities such as the pool, storage lockers, and closets.

Under the Fair Housing Act, all multi-family housing developments built after March 13, 1991, must meet the 7 Accessibility Requirements.

As a result of the complaint filed, The Grand Flats Apartments has agreed to take steps to correct the accessibility issues. It will cost approximately \$50,000.00 to bring the property into compliance with the Fair Housing Act. They have also agreed to participate in a Fair Housing Training.



Inadequate space beside handicapped parking spot



No ramp to exit common areas



Eviction Defense Program

Total of **505**
Households Helped

Success Story!

The Eviction Defense Program (EDP) began out of the need to address the pending housing crisis many faced due to the pandemic.

The EDP began in the Fall of 2020 when EHOC received CARES Act funds. Since then, **the EDP has been providing assistance to people who are facing threats of eviction, support in completing rental assistance applications, assistance with housing searches and relocations, and legal representation in court**

Total **\$45,000** of
Rental Assistance
provided

In one case, the EDP assisted someone who contacted EHOC **because her landlord threatened to evict her**. At the time, her housing voucher (section 8) had been discharged from the program. As a person whose only source of income was a fixed monthly disability check, **she was placed in a frightening situation because she knew she could not afford to pay market-rate rent**. Because of **her disability, she was at high risk for contracting COVID and was unable to work** in order to increase her income.

When she called, the EDP team was able to **stop the eviction, get her rental assistance, and give her time and assistance with finding a new home suitable for her mobility needs**. In collaboration with the Fair Housing team, we were also able to **request a reasonable accommodation with her new landlord** for her service animal to be allowed.

Afterward, the EDP team provided case management support and **assisted with having her voucher successfully reinstated**, in addition to receiving **utility assistance** and other community support. Finally, the EDP provided **funds for the security deposit** needed to move into her new unit.

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund **allowed our client not only to avoid eviction- but become stably housed** in a rental she can maintain with her current income!

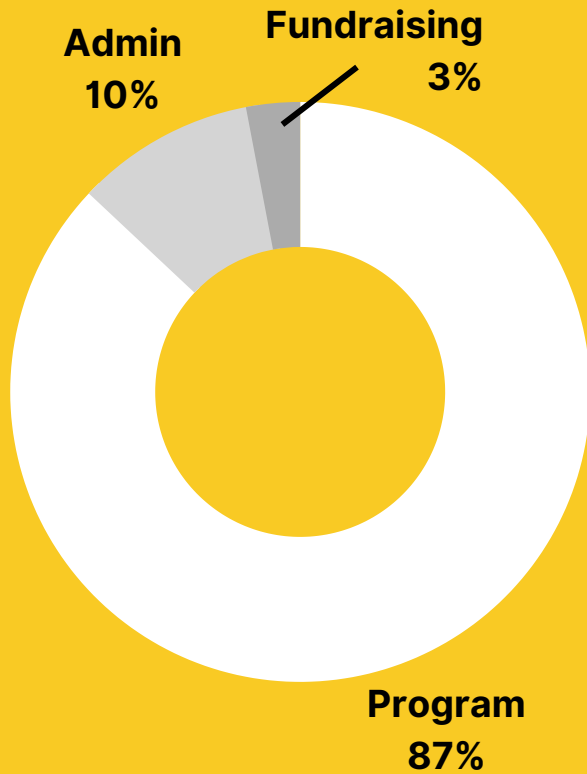




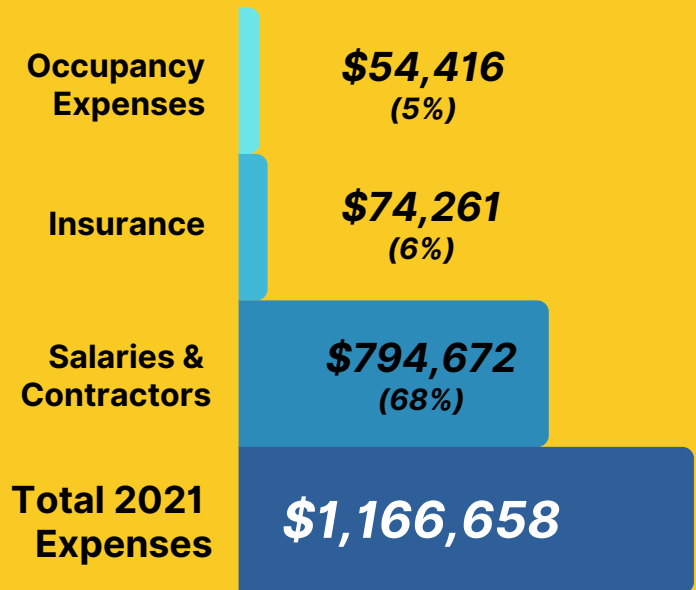
Our 2021 Financials

Because we are careful with your gifts

[For more information about EHOC's financials view our 990](#)

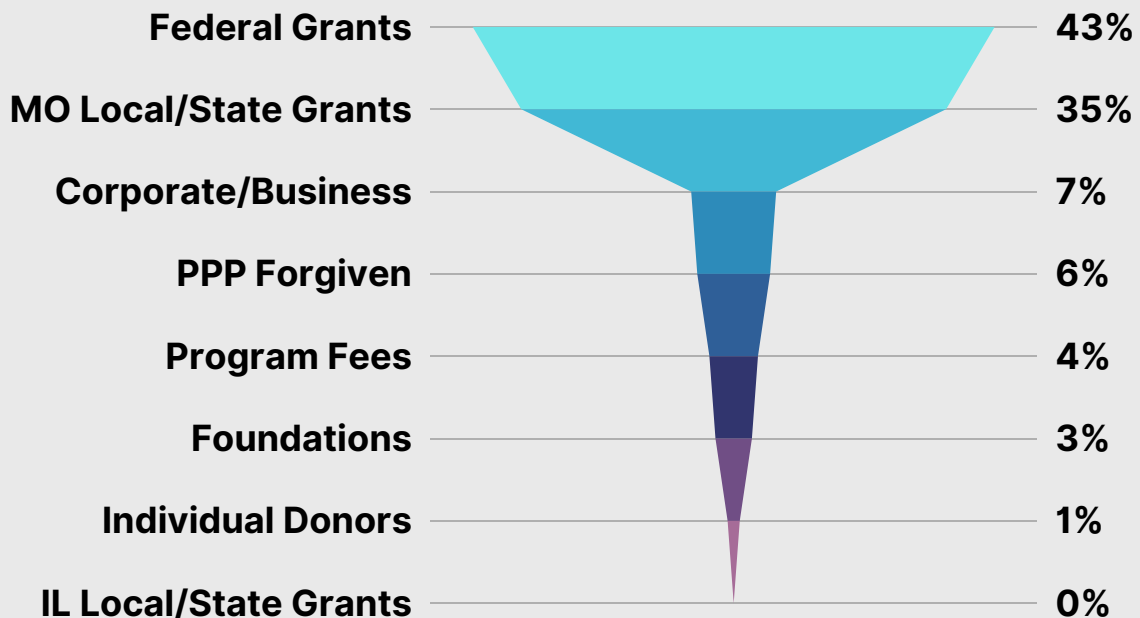


Largest Areas of Expense:



How EHOC's Work is Funded

***Total 2021 Revenue: \$1,145,449**



How Can You Support our Work?

Each department at EHOC is crucial to the collective success of our team. Building partnerships with local agencies and providing referrals and advocacy from multiple standpoints is what gives the callers the best outcomes in their own state of crisis. **Without the support of our funders, this work would not be possible.**

Currently, **EHOC is funded primarily through federal HUD funding** although we also receive state and local grants, and foundation grants. However, individual donations only make up 1.4% of our revenue. We know to ensure the sustainability of our organization we must increase our private donor pool.

For that reason, we ask you to consider becoming a donor to sustain our work and ensure we see our mission come to fruition:

...that all people will have equal access to housing and places of public accommodation!

Give Today.

Visit our website for more ways to support EHOC: <https://ehocstl.org/get-involved/>

DONATE ✦ VOLUNTEER ✦ INTERN ✦ EVENTS



Special thanks to...

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