

# **COMMUNITY PULSE**

**HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR**

YOUR QUARTERLY HOUSING CONNECTION

FAIR HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER JANUARY 2022

**GIVE BACK  
THERMOSTAT WARS**

**WHAT IS MEDIATION AND WHAT CAN IT DO FOR ME**



# *Fair Housing Resource Center Inc.*

The Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization offering several housing programs to benefit residents of Lake County, Ohio. The mission of the Fair Housing Resource Center is to promote equal housing opportunities for all persons and to advocate for fair housing and diversity in Lake and surrounding counties through the education and involvement of the public, governments, and the business community.

FHRC operates a Landlord/Tenant hot-line service for county residents to assist them in protecting their housing rights. FHRC also operates a fair housing intake complaint service for victims of housing discrimination. FHRC is a Housing Counseling agency certified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and provides homeowner counseling such as foreclosure prevention, predatory lending, home financing and repairs.

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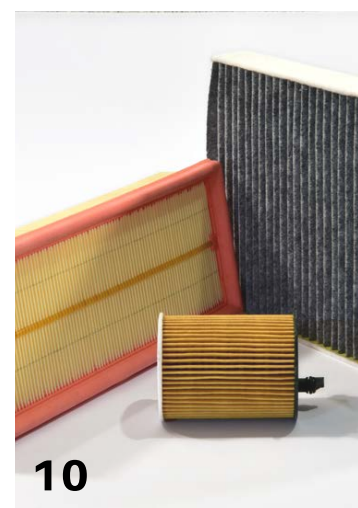
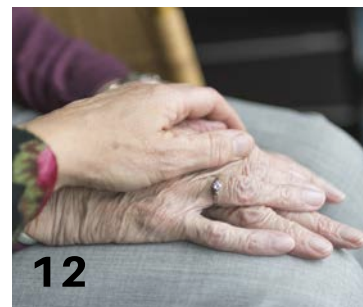
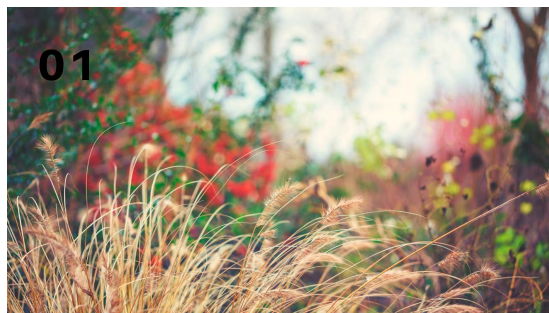
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Call (440) 392-0147  
for more information!

Contact [Hollie@fhrc.org](mailto:Hollie@fhrc.org)  
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# 'Tis the Season

By: Andrea Bissett

As our harsh Winter and holiday season approaches quickly, we're reminded of caring and thinking of others. Hopefully, that includes the outside "friends" living around your home. Whether you live in an urban or rural setting, taking a little extra time to care for nature can have a positive impact on your neighborhood, and the planet.

## Here's how to help animals in Winter:

Birds, beneficial insects, and other critters require natural, undisturbed areas. Helping wildlife overwinter means giving up the idea of a perfect lawn and tidy garden. Instead you can leave a few piles of leaves to create a winter wildlife habitat. Rake them into a corner where they won't be as visible. Create a bundle of plant stems where birds and beneficial insects can overwinter. For example, gather a bunch of twigs or sunflower plant stalks, and tie them loosely with twine. Leave perennials untrimmed until spring. The seeds sustain songbirds during the Winter, and the plant skeletons provide shelter. Birds get hungry in fall and winter, so just a couple of bird feeders can provide nourishment until Spring.

Just as there are good and bad insects in the garden landscape, there are also many beneficial small vertebrates who can be lured into the garden with the provision of shelter, food, and water sources. Lizards, toads, and snakes are extremely beneficial garden animals and can serve to decrease the harmful insect population. Bats are the major predator of mosquitoes and protect us from potentially dangerous mosquito bites.

A water source such as a pond or any water feature is a great attraction to these helpful critters. Just a pan of water that you maintain from freezing can provide drinking water as well as a place for birds to bathe. With a variety of bird houses for nesting sites in addition, you can encourage birds to stay through the season.

Beneficial insects such as ladybugs, praying mantis, bees, and garden spiders, are responsible for maintaining a delicate balance between good and bad organisms that affect your yard.

Where do the insects go when they are not visiting your garden? Some migrate, but the vast majority spend their entire life in and around your property. Many of our native solitary bees have laid eggs and have nests in soil or in standing dead trees or hollowed out branches. Bumble bee queens have found areas to overwinter under branches, in rock walls and in other relatively dry, snug places.

Leaving small pieces of fruit, nuts, and seed can be a great blessing on a cold day. Making wild edible ornaments to hang on trees is fun as well, using oranges, peanut butter, or homemade suet cakes.

Helping animals survive the Winter can improve your Spring, with healthier gardens and fewer pests.



## **LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING**

Lake County Council on Aging offers a Grocery Shopper Program. Volunteer grocery shoppers will take a list you give them and go to the store for you up to twice per month to purchase your groceries and deliver them to you. To get signed up for this program, call 440-205-8111 and request to speak to an I&A Specialist. Requests can also be made at the following link: <https://www.lcco.org/contact-us/>

## **LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities offers Adult Habilitation programs. These programs are non-work alternatives for individuals who choose to pursue social or recreational activities to enhance their quality of life. Adults over the age of 16 with developmental disabilities are eligible for this program. Please contact 440-350-5100 or email [info@lakebdd.org](mailto:info@lakebdd.org) for more information.

## **GEAUGA SOGI SUPPORT NETWORK**

Geauga Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (SOGI) Support Network offers peer support groups for all ages via Zoom. Meetings take place the first Wednesday of each month from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm. The peer support group is intended for individuals on the SOGI spectrum to obtain peer support in dealing with issues related to sexual orientation or gender identity. To receive a Zoom link, please email [GeaugaSOGI@gmail.com](mailto:GeaugaSOGI@gmail.com).

# **DID YOU KNOW.....?**

By: Chris Bowles

## **FAMILY PRIDE OF NORTHEAST OHIO**

Family Pride of Northeast Ohio offers Cooperative Parenting Education courses. These courses help co-parents to learn skills to reduce conflict, improve communication, and enhance positive parenting choices which in turn will lead to more positive outcomes for the children involved. The cost of this course is \$10.00 per participant. For more information, contact 440-536-5680. <https://familyprideonline.org/>

## **CATHOLIC CHARITIES**

Catholic Charities offers adoption services. These services help both those looking to adopt and those considering surrendering a child for adoption. Contact Catholic Charities Adoption Services at (440) 843-5631. (<http://ccdole.org/>) to set up a meeting

## **SAMARITAN HOUSE**

Samaritan House offers housing for homeless individuals in Ashtabula County Ohio. To speak with a staff member about becoming a resident, call 440-992-3178 or visit the shelter to talk to a staff member: 4125 Station Avenue in Ashtabula, Ohio 44004. Current Ashtabula County residents are eligible to stay at the shelter for up to 30 nights based upon need and maintaining compliance with shelter rules. Out of county residents, including out of state and transient residents, are eligible to stay at the shelter for a maximum of 2 nights. <http://ashtabulasamaritanhouse.weebly.com/>



## Real Estate "Love Letters" Do Not Spread the Love

By: Greg Gipson, FHRC Staff Attorney

Real estate buyers (and often sellers, too) have been encouraged to write "love letters" by their real estate agents for years. In tight markets like this one, the theory goes, the personal touch of the letter can help a buyer secure the deal even if higher offers or other sweeteners exist. A love letter is typically one in which a prospective buyer tries to signal that the buyer is uniquely deserving of the home because of, for instance, the buyer's appreciation of the seller's home décor and remodeling, or the buyer's and seller's shared values.

Such attempts at bonding risk violating fair housing laws, and sellers should not solicit or accept love letters from prospective buyers. Under the Fair Housing Act, a seller may not discriminate against home buyers on the basis of sex, gender, ethnicity, race, national origin, religion, or disability (through the Americans with Disabilities Act). There are other discriminatory categories that are part of these others, such as family size/composition (i.e., if there are two women or two men who are living together, if the family has a greater than average number of children, which some people might see as an indication of a particular religious background). A letter that includes reference to liking the home's proximity to a church, or the childrens' use of the generous backyard, or to the fact that the buyers are unmarried – much less one which includes a family photo – can all potentially tell the buyer information that can be used to discriminate.

Real estate agents have grown more conscious of this dangerous potential side effect, and the National Association of Realtors now instructs its members to remind sellers of anti-discrimination laws and buyers of the risk they create for themselves by being too personal and detailed. Oregon has banned seller's agents from passing on such letters to sellers in order to short-circuit the possibility of discrimination. Such letters are unlikely to disappear altogether, but sellers and buyers both should resist pressure to create or consider them, as doing so will open the door to serious risks to both parties without significant benefit.

It's the season of giving! Here are some ways you can give -- or receive -- assistance to and from our community!

As the weather gets colder and the snow begins covering the ground, we sometimes take for granted how lucky we are. Too many individuals spend the winter nights wondering where they can find somewhere warm to sleep or hot food to eat.

The **Sub Zero** Mission is a local non-profit agency that believes 'nobody should freeze to death in America.' The Mission seeks to help as many people as possible but especially looks out for veterans suffering for lack of housing. The Mission accepts donations in cash, but also seeks sleeping bags and warm clothing donations. Of course it always needs volunteers!

If you are interested in donating or volunteering, please visit:

Website: [www.subzeromission.org](http://www.subzeromission.org)

Address: 1760 North Ridge Rd., Painesville Twp, OH 44077

Phone number: 440-867-2626

All of us deserve nutritious food in our bellies, especially this holiday season. The **Geauga Hunger Task Force**, located in Chardon, ensures that no resident of Geauga County goes hungry. On its website, the Task Force provides lists of food items needed for its pantries and also accepts monetary donations. Every resident of Geauga County may receive food once per month.

If you are interested in donating, or in need of assistance, please visit GHTF at:

Website: [www.geaugahungertaskforce.org](http://www.geaugahungertaskforce.org)

Address: 209 Center St., Chardon, OH 44024

Phone: 440-285-2261

Email: [info@geaugahungertaskforce.org](mailto:info@geaugahungertaskforce.org)

Many of us have heard of Century 21 Asa Cox Homes, but did you know that Cassandra Cox has created a non-profit to give back to the community? Asa's Angels offer several ways to give back this holiday season. For example, you can sponsor a child's or family's Christmas to ensure a happy holiday. Asa's Angels also needs volunteers to organize and distribute the gifts, as well as to buy remaining items on children's Christmas lists.

If you are interested in giving to **Asa's Angels**, or if you need assistance, contact Asa's Angels at:

Website: [www.asaangels.com](http://www.asaangels.com)

Address: 2709 North Ridge Rd., Painesville, OH 44077

Phone: 440-221-9344

By: Nikole Capuozzo

**GIVE BACK**

# Tenant Screening

By: Chris Bowles

Renting an apartment has never been more difficult than right now. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many landlords have changed their policies for renting out apartments. One major change has been the addition of pre-screening procedures prior to showing units. Many landlords have begun requiring tenants to submit their social security numbers for credit and background checks prior to even seeing a unit. Tenants now often have to pay application fees of \$25.00 to \$30.00 per adult without knowing if they like the unit enough to want to live there for the next year. This can add up quickly, and hurt your credit score!

Many landlords claim that these policies are “safety precautions” to limit contact with strangers during the pandemic. However, these policies significantly disenfranchise lower-income individuals, whose limited resources reduce the range of apartments they can afford even before background check fees. Seniors or those on disability income do not have the means to afford all of these extensive fees just for an opportunity to view a unit. Furthermore, persons of color are already broadly disenfranchised by systemic and ingrained discrimination, which compounds the burden of exclusionary and expensive background checks.

As a renter, be prepared when searching for housing. You do not have to participate in tenant screening prior to seeing a unit. If housing providers are making this a requirement, try asking to see the home/apartment before paying the necessary charges. Inform housing providers that you do not want to commit to these requirements without seeing the condition of the home first. If they refuse, you can also request a virtual tour of the unit. Many housing providers have taken video, or photos of the home and can send them electronically. This way you can make sure the home fits all your needs prior to committing to application fees and screening requirements.

If a housing provider refuses to provide a virtual tour or allow you to see the home prior to screening you do have the option to walk away. Renting is a long term commitment. You would not purchase a vehicle without testing it first. It may seem easier said than done, but a landlord this inflexible will be difficult to work with in other ways, too.

While it is not illegal for landlords to charge these fees of prospective tenants, neither is it required. It is important for renters and landlords to be cognizant of the market trends and to be prepared for what is in store when trying to rent a unit.



Dear Housing Hollie,

As the temperatures are decreasing I am noticing that when I use my thermostat I cannot seem to get the temperature of my apartment above 65 degrees. I have asked my landlord to look at my furnace, as I do not have access to it, but he seems to be putting it off. Any help?!

Sincerely,  
Freezing

# HOUSING



Dear Freezing,

I am sorry to hear about your cold temperatures! As the weather changes seasons, Lake County landlords have an obligation to keep the temperatures of their units between 65-68 degrees. Temperature requirements are set by the local health department. Many older apartments are heated by a boiler. Therefore the landlord should turn the boiler up as temperatures lower. I suggest you write a letter giving 30 days to make the necessary repairs. You can also contact the local health department for assistance.

Sincerely,

*Hollie*

Housing H

Dear Housing Hollie,

As the snow has started to fall, I have noticed my landlord only plows the driveway, not the walkways. I asked him to shovel the walkway and he refuses, isn't this required?

Sincerely,  
Not an Ice Skater

Dear Not an Ice Skater,

I hear your frustrations! As the snow continues to fall, it can be difficult to come and go from your unit while sidewalks are a mess. I suggest you review your lease agreement to find the agreed-upon terms. Many housing providers do not shovel walkways. This is in part because, if they clear incompletely, they fear liability in the case of an injury. If your lease does not stipulate that you are responsible for sidewalks, I suggest writing a letter to your landlord requesting the shoveling to be completed. If you are obligated to take care of it, unfortunately there is nothing that can be done, other than shoveling!

Sincerely,  
Housing Hollie



**HOLLIE**



Dear Housing Hollie:

I am nearing the end of my lease agreement and my landlord gave me a Notice to Terminate Tenancy providing me with 30 days to move. I do not wish to move! Do I have to?

Sincerely,  
Staying Put

Dear Staying Put:

When you are in a yearly or monthly lease agreement, most have terms which state that the landlord or the tenant has to provide a 30-60 day notice to vacate the premises at the end of the lease. If your landlord decides that they no longer wish to rent to you, they have a right at the end of the lease agreement to provide a termination of tenancy notice. This notice is valid as long as it is provided within the proper time frame listed in your lease. Please call if you need any assistance!

Sincerely,

Housing Hollie



Do you have a question for Housing Hollie?  
Write to her at [hollie@fhrc.org](mailto:hollie@fhrc.org)



# What is Mediation and What can it do for me?

By: Greg Gipson, Staff Attorney

Fair Housing Resource Center offers a Landlord-tenant mediation program. “But what is mediation?” you may ask yourself. “And why do I care?” Mediation is a process for dispute resolution, using a neutral third party called a mediator. In this case, where a landlord and a tenant have a dispute they are unable to resolve themselves, or where two tenants may have a dispute, FHRC can help by providing a mediator who can make a fresh evaluation of the situation.

A mediator is trained in dispute resolution, and often is a lawyer, as that informs his or her understanding of the legal issues in a dispute requiring mediation. In a typical mediation, the mediator will speak separately to each party in order to understand each side’s position. The mediator will also explain to each party what the strengths and weaknesses of their positions are. The mediator’s job is to remain neutral as to which party has a “better” case but that does not prevent an objective explanation of how the dispute looks to an observer.

Finally, the mediator guides the parties to a resolution, presenting offers and counter offers for resolution until both parties are satisfied by the proposed agreement. A mediator does not propose solutions or give orders. The parties have to decide to resolve the matter with the mediator’s assistance. The final agreement between the parties is then reduced to a contract they sign and which obligates them to follow through on their part of the agreement. The mediator will assist in drafting this final document.

FHRC’s mediation program is free for income-qualified tenants, and in concert with other FHRC aid programs, can assist tenants in remaining housed and aid landlords in building trust and a stronger relationship with tenants to prevent disputes from escalating in the future.



# Budget Recovery from the Holidays

By: Nikole Capuozzo

Before you knew it, December rolled right in and thus the holiday fiasco had begun! If you are anything like me, you may not have done the best planning and may be overwhelmed with all the bills flowing in, but that's ok! I've got you covered! Here are some ways you can help recover your budget from over-spending.

1. Check out the damage! It is extremely easy to keep swiping a card when shopping, or when buying online where it is easy to just keep adding things to your bag mindlessly. Next thing you know, you've spent \$200 on gifts for your pets. In order to prevent those fun surprises on your statements, review your receipts and add them up. That way when the bill does come, you are aware of what was spent and can begin planning accordingly. Combine all the balances together to get an idea of the total you spent, and you will have a more complete picture of what you owe. This may even cause you to plan better for the next holiday season!

2. Begin spending less for the next month or so. Obviously, this can be easier said than done, but is key for recovering from over-spending.. For example, budget the necessary bills (rent/mortgage, utilities, etc.) but cut back on regular indulgences like Starbucks or eating out. For example, if you spend on average \$5 a day on coffee... that is \$150 a month you can use to help recover from the holidays. So, take advantage of all those gift cards you may have gotten and save your money!

3. Increase your income! Most people are probably thinking "I don't want to get another job!" and that is completely fine! There are several ways to increase your income without getting a second job. This can include selling clothes or accessories that may be hiding in your closet or signing up for Uber or InstaCart where you can work on your own time. These are not necessarily permanent, but can help alleviate some of the burdens you have incurred.

4. Use your tax return. The holidays may be over, but that just means tax season is approaching! One way to help reduce credit card debt or other bills, is to file your taxes early and use your tax return to pay down debt. This also boosts your credit score. If you have recovered from any financial difficulties from the holidays, use some of your tax return for next holiday season!

5. Finally, here's a tip for next holiday season that you can begin now! Start saving! This is definitely a challenge, but it will save you so much financial hardship in the long run. Many of us begin buying gifts 1 or 2 months prior to the holiday which can cause stress, headaches and frustration. In order to prevent that, it is a great idea to begin saving now. For example, say beginning January 1st you set aside \$10 per week, so by Christmas you have saved \$500 that can be used towards gifts or other holiday expenses. This will lessen the burden when the holidays roll around next year and help you manage your finances.

By using some of these tips, you will find that reducing the financial burden from the holidays is easier than you may have originally thought. With a little time and effort, you can pay down your debt, boost your credit score and maybe even begin saving for next holiday season!



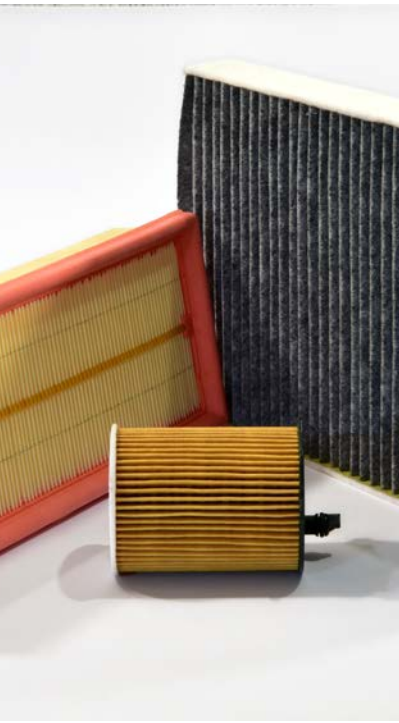
# TEN SIMPLE AND AFFORDABLE WAYS TO WINTERIZE YOUR HOME

By: Andrea Bissett

From chilly drafts sneaking through floors, doors, windows, and power outlets, to huge bills trying to combat the cold, winter can be tough on Ohioans. However, with a few easy and inexpensive tips you can save yourself some money and stay a little more comfortable this Winter.

## 1. Change Your Furnace Filter

Don't forget to change your furnace filters regularly. When your filters get dirty the furnace has to do more work to heat your home. Keeping furnace filters clean helps the furnace work more efficiently (and extends the furnace's life) and saves you money. Clean filters also reduce dust and improve the air quality of your home. Furnace filters are inexpensive and easy to find. Check your furnace for the size and type that you will need.



## 2. Eliminate Door Drafts

Drafts create a cold house and high energy bills. The U.S. Department of Energy says that drafts around exterior doors increase energy use from 5 to 30 percent. An easy way to stop the breeze is by placing a draft stopper along the bottom of exterior doors. Draft stoppers retail for as little as \$10 but you can make your own from a tube of fabric filled with rags, cotton batting, or even plastic grocery bags. A rolled-up towel or blanket works just as well and is easily washable. Door sweeps, which mount on the bottom of the door and block drafts, are easy to install and also cost as little as \$10.


## 3. Seal All Outlets

Outlets around your home can be very drafty. The simplest solution is to seal them with foam insulation covers (also called insulation gaskets or switch sealers). These are thin pieces of foam shaped to fit your wall switches and outlets with the holes cut out. Simply remove the outlet or wall plate, place the foam underneath, and put the cover back on. A package of six costs around \$6 at your local home improvement store.



## 4. Insulate Windows

Windows are another major source of drafts. Simple window insulation kits cost around \$20 and install easily without special tools. Just stick the clear sheets to the window frame with the enclosed double-sided tape, pull the material tight, and use a blow dryer to heat-shrink the material tight.



As an alternative if your view isn't important you can also use bubble wrap. Using medium to large bubble wrap adds insulation with tiny pockets of air as a buffer. Simply cut bubble wrap to window size, spray the window with water, and press the wrap firmly to the glass. This simple and free tip can add 50% efficiency to a single-glazed window, and 20% improvement on double glazed windows.

### **5. Weather Strip Windows and Doors**

Weather stripping is another affordable fix for drafty windows and doors. Weather stripping is a foam strip with a self-adhesive side. Cut it to length and attach it to the underside of windows, around windowpanes, or door jambs. A 10-foot roll usually costs less than \$5. You can also caulk around windows and use a small draft stopper on windowsills if there is room.

### **6. Remove or Tarp Window Air Conditioners**

If you have a window air conditioner, remove it, and close the window. If it is built-in, or you otherwise can't remove it, wrap it in a tarp to cut off any cold air from seeping through.

### **7. Change the Direction of Ceiling Fans**

If the air in your home feels hot and trapped, you can simply reverse the ceiling fans to push the warm air back down. Don't worry, it won't add a breeze! This simple trick can save you 10% on your heating bill.

### **8. Control Your Thermostat**

Set your thermostat lower when you go to bed or work. Turning down your thermostat 10 degrees for eight hours a day can save around 10% on your energy bill. You can also purchase a programmable thermostat to do the work for you.

### **9. Seal Up Any Holes in Exterior Walls**

Don't forget to check your exterior walls and foundation for holes and cracks that need to be sealed up. It is very common to find gaps and holes that can let in cold air -- along with critters trying to stay warm. Spray foam is a great, simple, and inexpensive solution. You can find it in both low and high expansion types depending on the size of your cracks. Once it dries, just trim with a razor knife to tidy up the area. Home improvement stores sell foam for around \$3.25 a can, which is less than you'll save by using it.

### **10. Use Heavy Drapes and Area Rugs**

Hanging heavy drapes on your windows can keep drafts out and heat inside your home. You can also hang blankets if you don't have curtains. Another big source of cold is the floor. Placing area rugs around your home where you will be sitting or standing will keep you feeling much warmer this winter.

These small steps can substantially reduce your energy costs and your comfort, too!



# Senior Housing Opportunities

By: Dana Pritschau

Ohio's senior population totals more than 2.8 million residents, and is growing. As a result, the current tight rental market presents special challenges for seniors looking for affordable housing. Limited affordable housing options specifically for seniors has waiting lists growing.

The length of your wait will depend on several things such as unit availability and the date that you applied for housing. Housing is based on a first come first serve basis, so you should apply as early as possible, even if you have housing now. Keep in mind that those with special circumstances may be given priority. The application processing time may also vary depending on the specific circumstances of each applicant and the time of the year.



According to

[https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-](https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/Ohio/Lake-County)

[search/Ohio/Lake-County](https://affordablehousingonline.com/housing-search/Ohio/Lake-County) there are 19 low-income apartment buildings available in the Lake County area. The following are a few of the locations that have housing specific to the needs of our senior community and their average wait times.

- Abbott's Manor: 1 to 2 years wait
- Breckenridge Village: 1 to 2 years wait
- Mary Rose Estates Apartments: 2 to 3 years wait
- Willoughby Hills Senior Apartments: 6 to 12 months
- Maple Ridge Senior Living: Immediate openings
- Oak Hill Village Apartments: Variable wait time
- Brentwood Apartments: Variable wait time



The Fair Housing Resource Center offers a short-term subsidy for senior/disabled tenants that can pay up to 70% of the rent and utilities for six months. We also offer assistance with first months' rent and utility deposits. If you can secure the place we can help you move in to it!



## **THERMOSTAT WARS**

By: Kisha Smith

The big question for most of us in Winter is "does changing my thermostat lower my bill?" The short answer is yes. If you leave for more than 8 hours at a time but your thermostat is set to the same temperature, you'll be paying to heat or cool an empty house. Now take that 8-hour period and multiply it by how many days you're gone per month. For some people, that's more than 20 days or 160 hours! Because utilities are charged per hour, that's 160 hours of unnecessary use that you could have otherwise been saving each month.

One of the easiest ways to save money on heating is to lower the temperature when you are not home, either simply gone for work during the day or running errands. When you're not home, you should set your thermostat to between 60 and 65 degrees. You may want to adjust this after considering the comfort of any plants or pets as well as any unique conditions (such as a particular drafty window or chilly exposure that will rapidly lower the temperature). Additionally, the location of your thermostat can affect its performance and efficiency.

To operate properly a thermostat must be on an interior wall away from direct sunlight, drafts, doorways, skylights, and windows. It should be located where natural room air currents allow warm air to rise, and cool air to sink. Furniture will block natural air movement, so do not place pieces in front of or below your thermostat. Also, make sure your thermostat is conveniently located for programming.

Everyone has a different comfort level, so you will need to choose a thermostat temperature in the winter that works for your family. The ideal temperature for living spaces is 70 degrees Fahrenheit per The Department of Energy. Please remember when you're not home to adjust your thermostat.

# What Makes a Good Landlord and Tenant

By: Kisha Smith

A good landlord has a clear lease that sets out communications. and obligations between you and your tenant. When a tenant calls with repairs, set up a time that is convenient for both of you, to come and inspect the damage. If the repair is not an emergency try to be deferential to the tenant's convenience. While you do not want your tenant harassing you at home or calling you at all hours of the day, you do not want to cut yourself off from your tenant completely. Tenants feel more at ease when they know how to get in touch with their landlord, and are confident that the landlord will respond reasonably. Tenants are also entitled to their privacy, so limit your visits to business hours or the early evening. You should also listen to the tenant's concerns and address them, even if you disagree about the issue. Try to tap into your compassionate side when dealing with your tenants, especially the good ones. If you show tenants a bit of compassion, they will remember the kindness. If tenants feel they have a compassionate, understanding landlord and not just a business-driven automaton, they will be more likely to renew their lease and will also respect the property because they respect you .

A good tenant respects their landlord and the rental property. The tenant should keep up their part of the maintenance (change the furnace filter, keep grass cut, plow the driveway, and change light bulbs etc.) and call the landlord promptly when something happens. Problems like a leaking faucet, running toilet, broken appliances can affect the landlord financially as well as inconveniencing the tenant, and are important to address as they arise . The property should be kept in a nice clean state. A good tenant pays the rent as stated in the lease agreement. If a problem does arise, the tenant should communicate to the landlord as early as possible. Keeping the lines of communication open with the landlord will go a long way towards resolving disputes amicably. And your landlord cannot fix the problem until you tell them about it. Keep in mind your lease agreement terms. Do not let someone not on the lease move in with you without discussing this with the landlord. If everyone follows the rules, communicates clearly, and respects each other, you can develop a solid and mutually beneficial relationship as tenant and landlord.



# Eviction Diversion Program

for Lake County Residents



If you or someone you know are facing eviction and require assistance, legal advice, or advocacy, give FHRC a call today.

## Eviction Diversion services provided:

- Landlord/Tenant Negotiation
- Legal Advice
- Court Appearances
- Settlements
- Landlord Education



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**Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc.**

1100 Mentor Avenue  
Painesville, Ohio 44077

# Meet the New FHRC Staff!

## *Kisha Smith Intake Specialist*

My name is Kisha Smith, I came onboard with Fair Housing Resource Center in November as an Intake Specialist. I believe this is a good fit for me because I am a compassionate person and love helping others. I'm a wife and a mom of 3 young men aged 22, 18 and 17 yrs old. I came from the City of Cleveland Airport Security where I worked for 2 years as a Principal Clerk, and I was in the City of Cleveland Water Department for 6 years as a Customer Account Associate. In the Water Department I helped my customers find assistance with their water bills so they wouldn't be without water. I missed working to help people which is what brings me here. I am so excited to get back to advocating for my clients and lending a helping hand.

## *Andrea Bissett Intake Specialist*

As a lifelong native of Northeast Ohio, I am thrilled to join the amazing and talented team at FHRC to help serve and give back to my community. Having twenty years of experience in healthcare management, and medical accounting I believe that I can make a difference in the lives of others. In my spare time, I enjoy rehabbing houses, gardening, working on my small farm, enjoying Lake Erie, and spending time with my lovely family.

## *Dana Pritschau Intake Specialist*

I am originally from Zelienople Pennsylvania and now reside in Perry, Ohio. I joined the Fair Housing Resource Center as an Intake Specialist in November 2021. My goal for personal growth is to return to school to major in social services, so I can do more work like FHRC's. I once received a Synergy award (when 1 plus 1 equals 3) for customer support. I take inspiration from Eleanor Roosevelt, who said "We must do the things we think we cannot do." I am looking forward to helping others and serving my local counties.



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