



Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California

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Diane L. Houk joined Emery Celli Brinckerhoff Abady Ward & Maazel LLP in 2009. Her practice focuses on housing discrimination matters. Prior to joining the firm, Diane co-founded the New York City-based Fair Housing Justice Center in 2004 and served as its first Executive Director until 2009.

Diane previously worked at the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in the Housing & Civil Enforcement Section from 1991 to 2004. During her tenure as a Senior Trial Attorney, Diane served as lead counsel in more than thirty housing discrimination cases filed by the United States in federal courts throughout the country. Her docket included systemic “pattern and practice” cases, as well as individual complaints referred by HUD, involving allegations of race, national origin, familial status, sex, and disability discrimination. These included rental discrimination cases based on “testing” investigations and local land use cases, such as *United States v. Yonkers, NY*; *United States v. Parma, OH*; *United States v. City of Jacksonville, FL*; and *United States v. Pooler, GA*.

Diane created and implemented the Schools and Housing Opportunity Initiative in 1999, a one-year pilot project between the Division’s Educational Opportunities and Housing Sections to assist jurisdictions in promoting voluntary residential integration opportunities that would decrease racial isolation in schools. In 2000, Diane was named Special Litigation Counsel by the Division. In that role, she oversaw the development and litigation of race, national origin, and religious discrimination cases involving land use and zoning, redevelopment plans, building and occupancy codes, and affordable housing programs.

Prior to joining the Department of Justice, Diane was in private practice in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for seven years litigating civil rights cases alleging race, national origin, disability, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation discrimination in housing and employment. She served as General Counsel to the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council and handled numerous cases utilizing evidence obtained from “fair housing testing.”

Diane co-taught the Housing Discrimination Seminar at Columbia Law School from 2005 to 2014 and the Civil Rights Tutorial for Stanford University’s Stanford in Washington Program for the prior six years.

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A local non-profit helping communities eliminate housing discrimination

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