

**STATEMENT OF COLLABORATION**  
**between COSTAR GROUP and the NEW JERSEY DIVISION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**

The New Jersey Legislature created the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR) seventy-five years ago to enforce the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) and to “prevent and eliminate discrimination” in the State of New Jersey in housing, employment, and places of public accommodation. N.J.S.A. 10:5-6. CoStar Group is a leader in providing international real estate information, analytics, and marketing services to create efficiency and transparency in the real estate marketplace. CoStar Group runs online real estate marketplaces including Apartments.com, LoopNet, Lands of America and BizBuySell.

DCR and CoStar Group have a mutual interest in ensuring that advertising for real estate for rent or sale in New Jersey is free of statements that unlawfully discriminate on the basis of characteristics protected by the LAD, including source of lawful income (as discussed below). See N.J.S.A. 10:5-12(g)-(h). Between DCR’s role as the State agency charged with enforcing the LAD’s prohibition on housing discrimination and CoStar Group’s footprint as an industry leader in the housing market, they have the ability to effect important changes in New Jersey by working together. Accordingly, CoStar Group and DCR have agreed to use their shared expertise and resources to collaborate on a series of measures designed to promote fair housing through education on the protections guaranteed by the LAD and other product features to help prevent discriminatory advertisements from appearing on CoStar Group’s platforms.

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The LAD prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, and other protected characteristics. N.J.S.A. 10:5-12. The LAD also prohibits discrimination by property owners, real-estate agents, and other housing providers based on a prospective tenant’s source of lawful income. N.J.S.A. 10:5-12(g)(1)-(2) & (h)(1)-(2). Sources of lawful income include subsidies or vouchers provided by federal, state, or local rental-assistance programs, including Section 8 housing choice vouchers, SRAP (State Rental Assistance Program), and TRA (temporary rental assistance). The LAD also prohibits posting or causing to be posted any advertisement for the rental of any real property “which expresses, directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification or discrimination as to . . . source of lawful income used for rental . . . payments.” N.J.S.A. 10:5-12(g)(3) & (h)(3). The New Jersey Supreme Court has recognized that discrimination on the basis of source of lawful income is particularly harmful because it impacts some of New Jersey’s most vulnerable residents.

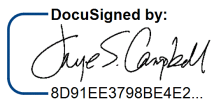
In 2019, DCR discovered that a significant number of online advertisements for rental housing in New Jersey contained unlawful limitations, specifications, or statements that discriminated on the basis of source of lawful income. These advertisements appeared across a wide range of online platforms, and contained discriminatory statements such as the following:

- “No Section 8”
- “No TRA”
- “Sorry Not Section 8 or TRA Approved”
- “Currently not accepting section 8 tenants”

DCR and CoStar Group have agreed to work together to help address such discriminatory language, and will take steps toward that goal. Steps that DCR and CoStar Group jointly agree to take include:

1. CoStar Group will develop and implement a method of notifying persons and companies, seeking to post rental housing advertisements for New Jersey properties on the CoStar Group platform, of fair housing laws in New Jersey. Methods that may be used to accomplish this task include a pop-up warning, a click-through notification, a website banner, or some other notification. The notification will convey, in substance that “The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, national origin, religion, gender, disability, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and source of lawful income to be used for rental payments, including, but not limited to, subsidies or vouchers provided by federal, state, or local rental-assistance programs like Section 8, SRAP (State Rental Assistance Programs), and TRA (temporary rental assistance). The law also prohibits housing listings that express, directly or indirectly, any such limitation or discrimination.”
2. DCR and CoStar Group will collaborate on efforts to enhance CoStar Group’s content filtering terms to allow CoStar Group to more comprehensively detect and remove advertisements that unlawfully discriminate on the basis of source of lawful income, including Section 8 vouchers and other forms of state and local rental assistance.
3. CoStar Group, in collaboration with DCR, will explore new methods for educating housing providers about the requirements of the LAD, including the source of income protections described above. This may include creating or modifying fair housing resources on CoStar Group’s platform(s). DCR will collaborate with CoStar Group to identify and develop suggested language for the websites.
4. CoStar Group and DCR will collaborate to develop and implement best practices for fair housing training for CoStar Group employees regarding source of lawful income discrimination.

Going forward, CoStar Group and DCR will continue to use their expertise and resources to collaborate in order to identify and develop solutions to the problem of housing discrimination, including discrimination based on source of lawful income. Both DCR and CoStar Group are proud of this collaboration, and are excited to continue this productive relationship.

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COSTAR GROUP

By: Jaye Campbell



NEW JERSEY DIVISION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

By Rachel Wainer Apter, Director

7/21/2020

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