



# Criminal History and Tenant Selection 101

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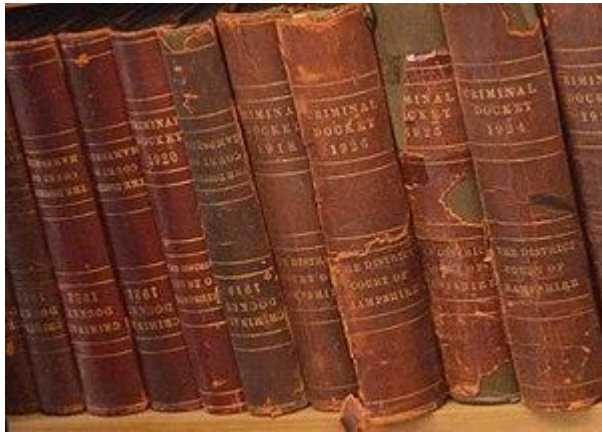
## Regional Housing Legal Services (RHLS)

RHLS is a nonprofit law firm with expertise in affordable sustainable housing, including housing developed using Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)



## Our Clients

Our LIHTC clients are nonprofits developing supportive housing for vulnerable populations and low-income Pennsylvanians.



## LIHTC Developers, Owners, and Property Managers

Must comply with myriad laws  
and regulations.

Penalties for noncompliance  
are serious.



# How to Stay Out of Trouble (and Court)

- Understand the rules that apply to you and the units you own/manage
- Use “best practices”

# Overview--The Scope of the Issue

- United States—highest rate of incarceration and world's largest prison population.
- Pennsylvania has a higher rate of incarceration than any other country in the world!
- 95 % of the people in prison today will be released.
- Affordable decent housing is the most critical factor to successful reentry.

# Carolyn Steinhofer

Intake and Outreach Coordinator of the Housing Equality Center of Pennsylvania—based in Montgomery County and the oldest Fair Housing council in the Country.

Who goes to prison?

What does this have to do with Fair Housing law?

# What Are You Going to Do, Sue Me?

- Avoiding litigation for rental decisions involving applicants with criminal records.
- The best defense is to have a good screening policy

...and follow it!



# Sara Pratt, Counsel, Relman Colfax

- Previously Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing Enforcement and Programs at HUD.
- Civil rights litigation practice—developed screening policy hailed as industry standard.