



# Department of Justice

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## **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SUES YPSILANTI, MICH., LANDLORDS FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department today filed suit against Ronald D. Peterson and Glen E. Johnson, the owner and rental manager, respectively, of 11 single family homes in Ypsilanti, Mich., alleging a pattern or practice of sexual harassment of female tenants.

The complaint, filed today in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, alleges that Johnson subjected female tenants to discrimination on the basis of sex, including severe, pervasive and unwelcome sexual harassment. The complaint alleges that Johnson made unwanted verbal sexual advances, entered the apartment of female tenants without permission or notice, granted and denied tangible housing benefits based on sex, and took adverse action against female tenants when they refused or objected to his sexual advances. The complaint also alleges that Peterson, the owner of the properties, is liable for Mr. Johnson's alleged misconduct, and that he knew or should have known of Johnson's alleged misconduct but failed to take reasonable preventive or corrective measures. This case is being handled jointly by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan in Detroit.

"No woman should have to live in fear of sexual harassment in her home," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Loretta King. "Landlords should be on notice that the Justice Department vigorously enforces the Fair Housing Act throughout the United States."

Acting U.S. Attorney, Terrence Berg added: "The conduct alleged in today's complaint is unacceptable – as well as a violation of our federal fair housing laws. We are taking action because no one should face such inappropriate harassment in their own homes."

The suit seeks monetary damages for victims, civil penalties and a court order barring future discrimination. Individuals who are or have been tenants in properties owned or managed by Peterson or Johnson who believe they may be victims of sexual harassment, or who have other relevant information about the case, are encouraged to call the Department of Justice's tip line at 1-800-896-7743 and leave a message in Box 994 or email the Department at [fairhousing@usdoj.gov](mailto:fairhousing@usdoj.gov). They may also call the United States' Attorney's Office at 313-226-9727.

Fighting illegal housing discrimination is a top priority of the Justice Department. The

Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin and disability. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt>. Additional information about the Fair Housing Act is also available at [www.HUD.gov](http://www.HUD.gov).

The complaint is an allegation of unlawful conduct. The allegations must still be proven in federal court.

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