Bringing New Jersey's Groundbreaking Zoning Policy to Reality

FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER

FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER is a nonprofit advocacy organization that uses legal, policy, and community-building strategies to dismantle decades of racial and economic discrimination in New Jersey and beyond.

We were founded in 1975 by the community organizers and civil rights lawyers who brought the watershed Mount Laurel case — which outlawed exclusionary zoning and established that every municipality in New Jersey must create its "fair share" of affordable homes.

As zoning reform has risen to the top of the national agenda in response to the housing affordability crisis, our five decades of experience provide important lessons on policy design, building strong coalitions, and enforcing laws to create homes.

- Thanks to our work, New Jersey has the strongest policy in the U.S. to prohibit exclusionary zoning, which has become known as the Mount Laurel Doctrine.

- We led advocacy efforts to develop and implement New Jersey's landmark 2024 law (A4/S50) which strengthens the Mount Laurel Doctrine and streamlines requirements for zoning changes. As a result, over 420 New Jersey municipalities are changing their zoning to create affordable housing and a wider range of housing options.

- As the United States faces a worsening housing affordability crisis, many states — from Colorado to Massachusetts to Texas — have recently enacted reforms that build on New Jersey's groundbreaking policy framework.

WE LITIGATE. WE ADVOCATE. WE BUILD POWER.

FairShareHousing.org

THE MOUNT LAUREL DOCTRINE

The Mount Laurel Doctrine has led to the creation of over 75,000 affordable homes — including over 25,000 new affordable homes since 2015 alone — and over 130,000 middle-class homes. Today, more than 400,000 New Jerseyans live in homes created by our work.

New Jersey stands out compared to peer states with entrenched exclusionary zoning, producing new homes at three times the rate of the rest of the New York City metropolitan area.