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Oakland Reaches Settlement with JPMorgan Chase on Eviction Lawsuit

OAKLAND, CA – A City of Oakland lawsuit accusing JPMorgan Chase Bank of wrongfully evicting tenants from foreclosed homes has been settled.

The lawsuit was one of five filed by the city in recent months accusing banks, their subsidiaries and several local real estate agents of violating an Oakland law that protects tenants from unjust evictions.

In February and March of this year, Oakland's Neighborhood Law Corps filed the lawsuits against JPMorgan Chase and Fidelity National Financial, along with their subsidiary companies and the local agents who are paid to remove tenants from properties the banks have acquired through foreclosure.

Tenants in foreclosed homes and apartments provided numerous examples of improper eviction notices served by those agents. Oakland's "Just Cause" ordinance allows landlords to evict tenants for specific reasons such as failing to pay rent or damaging property. However, foreclosure is not a "just cause" for eviction under the city's law.

JPMorgan Chase agreed to a settlement that includes a \$35,000 payment to the city. The settlement also includes an example of a legal notice that banks can use to determine the occupancy of a foreclosed property in Oakland.

"Evictions resulting from the foreclosure crisis continue to cause extraordinary hardship for working families here in Oakland and across California," City Attorney John Russo said. "I congratulate JPMorgan Chase and other defendants for quickly stepping up to settle these lawsuits and for recognizing the law in Oakland. We hope these settlements send a strong message to other banks and agents who do business in our community."

Russo also praised real estate agents Joseph McNulty and Percy Cheung, the first defendants to agree to settlements. The City Attorney's Office is in settlement negotiations with other defendants named in the complaints.
