

# LIBERTY COUNSEL

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REPLY TO FLORIDA

December 18, 2019

## Via Facsimile and Email

Tammy Delcour  
Regional Manager, MACO Management Company, Inc.  
369 S. Odell  
Marshall, MO 65340  
Fax: (573) 448- 2066  
info@macocompanies.com

RE: Insufficient response regarding MACO Management Christmas Light Ban

Dear Ms. Delcour:

I have received your faxed response of December 17, 2019, on behalf of MACO Management regarding MACO's ban on Christmas lights and other decorations at Grandview Estates. The email did not come through, because it was sent to "[Libert@lc.org](mailto:Libert@lc.org)," which is not a working address.

MACO Management has prohibited senior residents at Grandview Estates (a HUD-subsidized residential complex) from decorating their duplexes (which are quite drab in winter - see attached color pictures in original letter) with outside Christmas decorations, which could include lights, yard ornaments, or Nativity scenes. This ban is in sharp contrast to years past, in which Grandview Estates management allowed Christmas lights and seasonal yard decorations. Nothing in the lease agreement or regulations, in light of plain language or past interpretation, supports such a ban.

Does MACO really want to be known nationwide as the company that bans elderly residents from having Christmas lights or yard ornaments? MACO could have offered to put up Christmas lights, upon request from elderly residents, if it was actually worried about "damage" or aesthetics, but these were not the reasons given.

The November 12, 2019, letter from management to the residents instead said the Christmas light and decoration ban was because of "**Government's Fair Housing rules.**" "**Everyone in the complex is funded in part by Government funds, so we are required to follow their rules.**"

This contradicts the attached letter from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) ([currently hosted on HUD's website](#)) stating "The holiday season is an opportunity to celebrate our diverse traditions and faiths. **The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development continues to strongly support and respect the display of all**

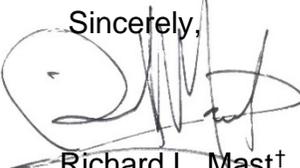
**religious symbols on properties receiving HUD assistance. We discourage anyone from interfering in the free exercise of religion and prohibiting residents from celebrating the joys of the season.”** (Emphasis added).

Your response of December 17, 2019, fails to cite ANY HUD or “government Fair Housing rule” supporting the Christmas light and decoration ban. You cite to the “lease agreement” and or “MACO Management Rules and Regulations” for support that residents are aware of the Christmas light ban. Here is all language remotely supportive of this claim: “Lawns and other common areas are to be kept clear of furniture, bicycles, birdbaths, and etc.” There is no ban on Christmas lights here. “No signs, clothing, sheets, towels, etc...shall be hung from the windows, rails or porches, or aired or dried in the yard space.” There is no ban on Christmas lights here. “No exterior alterations will be permitted, including clotheslines, mailboxes, greenhouses, doghouses, fencing or screening of any kind. No plastic or any other covering may be placed over the windows or doors on the exterior or interior of any building.” There is no ban on Christmas lights, here, either.

Nothing in the lease agreement or “MACO Management Rules and Regulations” bans temporary Christmas lights, nor anything approximating this. The fact that residents of Grandview Estates have put up Christmas lights for many years prior with MACO’s knowledge and consent belies this claim. The plain language of the lease agreement and regulations does not prohibit seasonal decorations like Christmas lights, and therefore the ban is itself a breach of the lease agreement as it interferes with the lessees’ possession and quiet enjoyment of the premises.

Finally, the manager of Grandview Estates was also told by MACO Management that the decoration ban included wreaths on the outside of residents’ doors, but she was able to obtain permission to hold a “Holiday Wreath contest.” Your letter apparently revokes that, now, as well.

Please confirm by close of business on December 19, 2019, that the Christmas light and decoration ban (which has no foundation in any of the attached documents) has been rescinded, or Liberty Counsel will file a complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for civil rights violations.

Sincerely,  
  
Richard L. Mast†

CC  
**Via Email**  
Dee Wampler, Esq.

dee@deewampler.com

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† Licensed in Virginia  
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