



Gwen Roy-Harrison

Principal and Co-Chair of the DEI Committee

groyharrison@offitkurman.com

Washington, D.C. – 240.507.1732

Gwen Roy-Harrison's practice focuses on representing multi-family housing providers, developers, and business owners of all sizes, including litigating residential and commercial landlord disputes. She spends much of her time in court prosecuting and defending cases on behalf of large property management companies, small to medium businesses, and individual owners. Gwen has honed an expertise in The Fair Housing Act (FHA) and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), with respect to housing providers and HUD compliance. She advises and represents clients involved in HUD complaints, state/local discrimination investigations, regulatory compliance, and conducts Fair Housing Act trainings. Gwen has also honed a specialty in resolving disputes for condominium and cooperative associations. Outside of the courtroom, she devotes considerable time to the transactional sphere, including lease review and drafting, non-disclosure agreements, and confidential settlement or general release agreements.

Gwen is frequently conducting virtual and in-person presentations in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia on HUD compliance, FHA training, and best practices for housing providers to avoid a fair housing/discrimination complaint.

Education

- University of San Diego School of Law (J.D.)
 - Lead Articles Editor, San Diego Law Review
- University of Mary Washington (B.S.)

State Bar Admissions

- Virginia
- District of Columbia
- Maryland

Professional Affiliations

- Coalition of Women's Initiatives in the Law (DC Chapter), Board Member, 2020-present

Services

- Fair Housing
- Landlord Representation
- Property Management
- Real Estate Law and Transactions

- DC Bar Association, Real Estate, Housing and Land Use Section
- The Barristers
- Co-Chair, DEI Committee

Recognitions

- Named *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America* for Litigation - Real Estate, Real Estate Law (2021-2025)
- Selected to Maryland Rising Stars® for Real Estate (2023-2027)
- Selected to Washington, D.C. Rising Stars® for Real Estate (2023)

Blog

July 7, 2026

HUD's Assistance Animal Reset: Where is Federal Enforcement Heading?

If there is one fair housing topic that has generated a disproportionate amount of litigation, complaints, training questions, and frustration over the past decade, it is assistance animals. For years, housing providers operated under HUD guidance that recognized both...

July 1, 2026

Property Management Playbook

Offit Kurman's Landlord Representation group is launching a new video series: the Property Management Playbook. Hosted by Billy Cannon alongside colleagues Brian Dorwin, Jennifer Jean-Gilles, and Gwen Roye-Harrison, this series digs into the real-world scenarios property management clients face...

June 3, 2026

HUD's New Fair Housing Governance Strategies: Accountability, Detection, and Interagency Strategic Targeting

HUD's unending flurry of announcements, proposed rulemaking, and press releases is neither subtle nor accidental. Over the past 18 months or so, HUD's announcements have coalesced around three themes likely to shape the next several years of federal housing...

April 24, 2026

Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act

In this episode of The DC Rental Act in Three Minutes, Offit Kurman attorneys Brian Dorwin and Gwen Roy Harrison break down how the Rental Act reshapes the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) for DC multifamily properties. They...

April 17, 2026

Understanding Pleading Technicalities Under the DC Rental Act

In Episode 3 of The DC Rental Act in Three Minutes, Offit Kurman attorneys Robert Donahue and Brian Dorwin break down one of the most consequential—and least understood—changes in the new law: how courts handle pleading technicalities. They...

April 13, 2026

Deregulation Is Not Immunity: How Fragmented Federal Enforcement Is Reshaping Fair Housing Compliance

One of the most overlooked developments in 2026 is how enforcement has splintered

across federal agencies—each operating independently of HUD’s policy posture. HUD’s rescission of numerous guidance documents and the federal government’s recalibration of civil rights priorities do not...

April 9, 2026

Navigating DC's Rental Act: Changes in Eviction

In Episode two of The DC Rental Act in Three Minutes , Offit Kurman attorneys Brian Dorwin and Gwen Roy Harrison examine key changes to eviction procedures under the new Rental Act, with a focus on public safety cases. They...

April 2, 2026

Understanding DC Protective Orders Under the RENTAL Act

The DC RENTAL Act has reshaped how protective orders work in eviction cases—making them faster, more consistent, and far more beneficial for housing providers. A protective order requires tenants to pay rent into the court registry rather than directly...

March 25, 2026

The DC RENTAL Act in Three Minutes: A New Series

In this kickoff episode of The DC RENTAL Act in Three Minutes, Offit Kurman attorneys Brian Dorwin, Gwen Roy Harrison, and Rob Donahue introduce the sweeping legislative changes that took effect in Washington, DC on January 1, 2026. The...

March 12, 2026

HUD’s New Citizenship Verification Mandate: What HUD-Assisted Housing Providers Must Do

In January 2026, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued a surprise directive announcing immediate verification of citizenship and eligible immigration status for all households receiving federal housing assistance. Owners, public housing authorities, and managers of...

February 12, 2026

The HUD Administration One Year Review: Withdrawal of Fair Housing Guidance, Administrative Cutbacks, and the Implications for Housing Providers

Approximately one year into the second Trump Administration, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has taken notable steps to reshape the federal fair housing compliance landscape by withdrawing numerous guidance documents issued by HUD’s Office of...

January 21, 2026

2025 Fair Housing Trends Report: What We’re Seeing and Why It Matters

The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) is the nation’s largest nonprofit fair housing organization, leading investigations, enforcement, advocacy, and research to advance equal housing opportunity. It processes the majority of fair housing complaints nationwide and plays a significant role...

December 17, 2025

December’s Enduring Legacy: From Emancipation to Equitable Housing

Every December, we are encouraged to reflect on a defining milestone in American constitutional and civil rights history – the ratification of the 13th Amendment on December 6, 1865. This amendment abolished involuntary servitude, legally closing the door on...

November 13, 2025

VAWA Compliance: New 2025 HUD Forms & What You Need to Know

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has long provided essential housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. For housing providers operating federally subsidized housing programs (e.g., Section 8, public housing, and LIHTC), compliance...

October 9, 2025

Rent Filings During the Federal Shutdown: What DC, VA & MD Landlords Need to Know

With the federal shutdown underway, landlords in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia are asking: Should we pause filings for federal workers? The short answer — no, and here's why. As the federal government shutdown begins, landlords across...

DC Rental Act

Episode 0

Offit Kurman attorneys Brian Dorwin, Gwen Roy Harrison, and Rob Donahue introduce the sweeping legislative changes that took effect in Washington, DC on January 1, 2026. The DC Rental Act—passed just one day earlier—marks one of the most significant shifts in landlord tenant law the District has seen in years.

Episode 1

DC's Rental Act now requires judges to issue preliminary protective orders at the first eviction hearing, ensuring tenants begin paying rent into the court registry right away. As Rob Donahue and Gwen Roy Harrison explain, this shift creates faster, more consistent protections for landlords while still allowing tenants to raise defenses or request a Bell hearing. For guidance on navigating these changes or protecting your rental interests, contact our team today.

Episode 2

DC's Rental Act significantly changes how landlords can respond to violent or dangerous behavior on rental properties. In this episode, Brian Dorwin and Gwen Roy Harrison explain how the new law replaces the former 30-day notice and repeat-violation requirement with a 10-day notice to vacate for crimes of violence or dangerous crimes—without requiring a criminal conviction first. While this reform is intended to improve safety and align DC with neighboring jurisdictions, key questions remain about how courts will interpret and apply it. Property owners and managers should consider seeking legal guidance to understand how these changes affect their rights and responsibilities under the Rental Act.

Episode 3

Offit Kurman attorneys Robert Donahue and Brian Dorwin explore a key procedural

change under the DC Rental Act in Episode 3 of *The DC Rental Act in Three Minutes*. They focus on how the law alters the treatment of pleading technicalities in landlord-tenant cases. The Act replaces the former rule requiring automatic dismissal for minor filing defects with judicial discretion, allowing courts to assess whether an error actually causes prejudice. This change reduces unnecessary dismissals, streamlines litigation, and promotes more practical case outcomes.

Episode 4

Offit Kurman attorneys Brian Dorwin and Gwen Roy Harrison examine major reforms to the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) in this episode of *The DC Rental Act in Three Minutes*. They explain how the Rental Act narrows TOPA's broad reach by creating new exemptions for certain multifamily properties, including new construction, LIHTC properties, small landlords, and specific ownership changes. The discussion highlights how these updates reduce transaction delays, ease deal uncertainty, and help unlock DC's multifamily sales market while preserving key tenant protections.

Property Management Playbook

Offit Kurman's Landlord Representation group is launching a new video series: the Property Management Playbook. Hosted by Billy Cannon alongside colleagues Brian Dorwin, Jennifer Jean-Gilles, and Gwen Roye-Harrison, this series digs into the real-world scenarios property management clients face every day. Topics include handling argumentative tenants, maintenance best practices, and fair housing dos and don'ts. Watch the full series to get practical guidance straight from Offit Kurman's landlord representation attorneys.

Publications & News

July 10, 2026

32 Offit Kurman Attorneys Recognized in 2027 Edition of Maryland Super Lawyers

December 19, 2025

24 Offit Kurman Attorneys Recognized in 2026 Edition of Maryland Super Lawyers

May 29, 2025

Two Offit Kurman Attorneys Named to Washington, D.C. Super Lawyers and Rising Stars List for 2025

March 3, 2025

Women in Law: Reflections on Progress, Mentorship, and Resilience

January 2, 2025

24 Offit Kurman Attorneys Honored on 2025 Maryland Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists

December 4, 2024

Offit Kurman Attorneys to Lead "Legal Horror Stories" Panel for Multifamily

Housing Professionals

December 18, 2023

Offit Kurman Maintains a Strong Presence on the 2024 Maryland Super Lawyers List

November 18, 2021

John Raftery and Gwendolyn Roy-Harrison Published in Law360 and Lexis Nexis Practical Guidance

Featured Works

Appearances:

- Guest, "HUD's first-year reset on fair-housing guidance is reshaping federal housing rules," the Federal Drive with Terry Gerton, April 9, 2026

Speaking Engagements & Presentations

- Presenter, "Assistance Animals After the Reset: What Defense Counsel Need to Know," myLawCLE, June 26, 2026
- Presenter, "DC Criminal Screening and HUG Disparate Impact Claims," April 22, 2026
- Presenter, Tower Companies, April 14, 2026
- Presenter, Fair Housing Webinar three-part series, March 13, 2026
- Presenter, "HUD Citizenship Verification Requirements: What Property Owners and Operators Need to Know Now," Property Management Association, February 11, 2026
- Presenter, "2025 Maryland Legislative Updates for Landlords", Property Management Association, November 13, 2025
- Speaker, "DC's NEW Rental Act - Updates to Landlord-Tenant Regulations and Laws", Property Management Association, October 7, 2025
- Presenter, "DC, MD, VA Fair Housing," PG Sports & Learning Complex, October 2025
- Presenter, "Virginia 2025 Legislative Updates," Arlington, VA, October 2025
- Speaker, "Trump 2.0: What It Means for Multifamily in 2025," National Apartment Association Rental Housing Advocacy and Legal Summit (RHALS), July 2025
- Presenter, "New Developments in Fair Housing" webinar, National Apartment Association, April 2025
- Presenter, "Fair Housing Compliance: Best Practices for Housing Providers in DC, MD, VA," Property Management Association, April 2025
- Presenter, DC Fair Housing Compliance Training, McLean, VA, March 2025
- Speaker, "Legal Horror Stories (Risk Management for Property Management Professionals)" Northern Virginia Apartment Association, December 2024
- Presenter at D.C. Landlord-Tenant Updates in the Law Seminar, Washington, D.C., February 14, 2018.
- Presenter at VA Landlord-Tenant Seminar, *VA Landlord-Tenant Laws and Fair Housing Concerns*, Leesburg, VA, October 11, 2018
- Presenter at Landlord-Tenant Seminar, *VA & MD Landlord-Tenant Updates in the Law*,

Clarksburg, MD, March 27, 2019

Publications

- Co-Author, Evaluating Assistance Animal Requests Under the FHA, LexisNexis Law360, 2021
- Co-author, The Fair Housing Act: Enforcement Actions, LexisNexis Practical Guidance, 2021
- Co-author, The Fair Housing Act: Prohibited Practices, Types of Claims, and Compliance Strategies, LexisNexis Practical Guidance, 2021