

# Your Rights to Fair Housing

## Housing Discrimination

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on a person's

- **Race** (any race)
- **Color** (any color)
- **Religion** (any religion or no religion)
- **National Origin** (any nationality)
- **Sex** (including gender identity)
- **Familial Status** (presence of children under 18 in family, pregnancy, or adults attempting to secure custody of children)
- **Disability** (including physical, mental, or developmental disabilities)

## Prohibited Conduct

Discrimination includes refusing to rent or sell, charging more, or offering different terms to someone because of his or her membership in one of the above groups.

Housing providers are prohibited from making discriminatory statements or publishing discriminatory advertising, as well as from making false statements about availability.

People with disabilities are also allowed to obtain reasonable accommodations to rules or policies to allow them to reside in housing and to make reasonable modifications to the property (such as installing grab bars or a ramp), if needed because of their disability.

## Harassment and Retaliation

Harassing someone, or retaliating against or interfering with someone who is attempting to exercise their fair housing rights, is also prohibited.

## Examples of Possible Discrimination

The following statements may indicate possible discrimination:

- *“Sorry, but after we spoke on the phone we rented the last unit.”*
- *“This is a Christian home.”*
- *“You would feel more comfortable in a different neighborhood.”*
- *“Because of noise, families with children have to live on the first floor.”*
- *“I have to charge you a pet deposit for your service animal.”*
- *“You may not install grab bars in the bathroom.”*
- *“None of your kind of people live in this area.”*
- *“We only rent to people who speak English.”*
- *“Since you use a walker, you need additional insurance coverage.”*
- *“We have a strict policy: if you have an arrests history, you cannot rent here.”*
- *“We only allow 2 people in a 1-bedroom unit.”*

## What Properties are Covered?

The Fair Housing Act covers most residential units, such as:

- Houses
- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Group homes
- Shelters (homeless & domestic violence)
- Migrant housing
- Long term transient lodging

There are limited exceptions for some housing, including owner-occupied buildings of 4 or fewer units and some single-family homes. In addition, religious organizations and private clubs who rent housing for non-profit purposes may favor their members. Contact the Fair Housing Project for more information

## Who Must Comply?

The Fair Housing Act applies to a wide variety of housing transactions, including rentals, sales, home mortgages, appraisals, and homeowners insurance.

Landlords, property managers, real estate agents, lenders, insurance companies, homeowners associations, condo boards, and others are prohibited from discriminating against someone based on their membership in one of the groups listed above.

## Useful Tips

What you should do if you believe you have experienced housing discrimination:

- Contact the Fair Housing Project at <https://www.fairhousingnc.org/>.
- Keep a journal of incidents of discrimination.
- Write down what you experienced, including names, dates, addresses, rental terms, and any other details about your interaction.
- Keep any documents related to the discrimination, including all emails and text communications.
- Following the incident, you have one year to file an administrative complaint or two years to file a lawsuit in court.