

Fair Housing in Racine



A Brief Overview

Overview:



- What is Fair Housing
- Protected Classes
- Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications
- Fair Housing and LGBTQ+
- Using Fair Housing as a Housing Search Tool
- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

What is Fair Housing



What is Fair Housing:

Fair housing is the right for all people to live where they choose, have equal access to housing (which includes finding, purchasing, renting, and selling) and enjoy the full use of their homes without unlawful discrimination, interference, coercion, threats, or intimidation by owners, landlords, real estate agents, banks or any other persons.



What is Fair Housing:

It shall be unlawful to:

- Engage in any conduct relating to the provision of housing which otherwise makes unavailable or denies dwellings because of a protected class.



<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/humanrights/fairhousing>

What is Fair Housing:

In the sale and rental of housing no one may take any of the following actions based on protected class:

Refuse to rent or sell housing

Refuse to negotiate for housing

Make housing unavailable

Deny a dwelling unit

Set different terms, conditions or privileges

Provide different housing services or facilities

For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting)

Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale, or rental

Deny anyone access to or membership in a facility or service (such as a multiple listing service)

What is Fair Housing:

It is illegal for anyone to:

- Threaten, coerce, intimidate or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise that right.
- Advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on (protected classes).



What is Fair Housing:

Types of Housing Covered by the Fair Housing Act:

- ❑ Properties for sale/rent
 - ❑ Houses/Condos
 - ❑ Apartments
 - ❑ Mobile Homes
- ❑ Retirement Communities
- ❑ Assisted Living Facilities
- ❑ Timeshares
- ❑ Nursing Homes
- ❑ Homeless Shelters



**There are some exemptions including senior housing or small, owner-occupied buildings.*

Approximately 3.7
million instances of
housing discrimination
occur annually.

Protected Classes



Protected Classes:	Federal	State	Local (Racine)
Race	X	X	X
Color	X	X	X
Religion	X	X	X
Sex	X	X	X
National Origin	X	X	X
Disability/Handicap	X	X	X
Familial Status	X	X	X
Sexual Orientation		X	X
Marital Status		X	
Ancestry		X	X
Public Assistance/Lawful Source of Income/ Economic Status		X	X
Age		X	X
Status of a Victim of Domestic Abuse, sexual abuse, or stalking		X	
Veteran's Status			X
Disabled Veteran's Status			X
Gender Identity			X

Potential Violations:

Fair Housing violations are rarely blatant and are often done with a handshake and a smile.

We can't allow a teenage boy and girl to sleep together in the same room.

Parking is first come, first served, no exceptions.

I'm sorry, I cannot work with a translator.



Potential Violations:

Are you married?

If you complain, I am going to call immigration on you and your family.

I won't accept child support. What if the father never pays? Then I am out a months rent.

I need an extra month security deposit in case your ex comes back and destroys my unit.

Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications



Reasonable Accommodation:

A change in rules, policies, practices or services when such accommodations are necessary to afford a person with a disability the equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.

Disability is typically defined as an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.




Persons Not Covered:

- ❑ Individuals currently engaged in illegal drug use.
- ❑ Individuals who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals or substantial physical damage to the property of others.



Reasonable Accommodation:

- ❑ A housing provider may ask for medical documentation for the requested accommodation, but cannot inquire into the nature of the disability.
 - ❑ A reasonable accommodation cannot cause the housing provider undue hardship or cause financial burden.
 - ❑ A reasonable accommodation can be requested verbally or in writing. It is recommended to put a request in writing.
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Reasonable Accommodations:

Designating an accessible parking spot.

Allowing a live-in aid to stay in the tenants apartment.

Allowing a service animal in a pet free building.

Reasonable Modifications:

A structural change made to an existing premises occupied by a person with a disability in order to afford such a person the full enjoyment of the premises.

Disability is typically defined as an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.



Reasonable Modifications:

Installing grab bars in a bathroom.

Allowing a tenant to widen doors to accommodate a wheelchair.

Allowing a tenant to install handrails in the entryway to the apartment.

Allowing the tenant to install a wheelchair ramp.

Fair Housing and LGBTQ+



Protections:

- The Federal Fair Housing Act does not specifically protect based on sexual orientation or marital status.
- The State of Wisconsin protects sexual orientation and marital status.
- The City of Racine protects sexual orientation and gender identity.



Fair Housing and Housing Search:



The FHA Does Not:

- ❑ Protect against a history of eviction.
- ❑ Protect against a presence of a criminal history.
- ❑ Guarantee housing if you have a Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8).



Recognizing Discrimination:

“I can’t seem to find a unit. “

“The person told me the place was rented, but the sign is still outside.”

“When I arrived, I was told the rent was \$750, not \$675. “

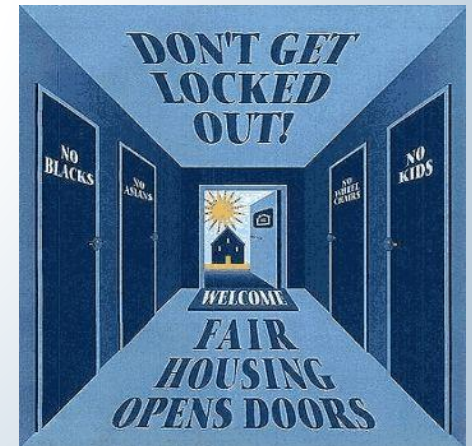
Recognizing Discrimination:

- Remember discrimination often happens with a handshake and a smile.



What to do:

- ❑ Call the City of Racine Fair Housing Department.
- ❑ File with HUD FHEO.
- ❑ File with State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Equal Rights Division.
- ❑ File a lawsuit.
- ❑ Educate residents about their fair housing rights.



Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing



AFFH:

The Fair Housing Act has two goals:

- 1) To end housing discrimination;
- 2) To promote diverse, inclusive communities.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, embodies our strongly-held American values of fair access and equal opportunity.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing has been part of the Fair Housing Act since its inception in 1968.

Thank You:

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