

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IS ILLEGAL

The **Fair Housing Act** was passed in 1968, yet housing discrimination remains a major problem in Pennsylvania. Housing discrimination is typically subtle. Consumers are met with a smile and a handshake, but they are denied housing opportunities. Local reports have documented persistent housing discrimination in our communities: landlords with “no kids” policies, persons with disabilities refused reasonable accommodations and modifications that would enable them to live independently, housing providers refusing to return phone calls of prospective renters who “sound black,” refugees denied housing because of their national origin, fees or additional deposits for assistance animals, and buyers steered to different communities based on their race and/or national origin.

The **Fair Housing Act** covers all housing-related transactions including rentals, sales, mortgage lending, homeowners insurance, and appraisals. Covered housing includes apartments, private housing, public housing, condominiums, homeless shelters, mobile home parks, nursing homes and nonprofit housing programs.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that 2.5 million people are victims of housing discrimination every year.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Fair Housing Act is a federal law that protects people from housing discrimination on the basis of:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Sex
- Religion
- Disability
- Familial Status*

**Familial status means the presence of children under 18 in a household, pregnant women or anyone in the process of adopting or securing legal custody of a child.*



The **Housing Equality Center** is a nonprofit organization leading the effort to eliminate housing discrimination in Pennsylvania through education, advocacy and enforcement of fair housing laws. We provide victims of discrimination with legal help, perform testing to determine the existence of discrimination, educate the public, consult with and train housing providers, and work with housing and related service providers to ensure compliance with anti-discrimination laws. We assist housing discrimination victims and conduct testing investigations in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton and Philadelphia Counties.

SPOT THE SIGNS OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION!

The following activities may indicate discrimination:

- The information told to you in person does not match the information told to you on the phone.
- The landlord, lender or insurer takes your application and promises to call but never does.
- The sign says “vacancy,” but the landlord says it was just rented.
- The landlord imposes burdensome conditions for rental occupancy or refuses to allow reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.
- The rental or sales agent claims the property is unsafe for children.
- Advertisements stating “mature adults preferred,” “adult/family sections,” or “no children.”
- “Steering,” which is when an agent refuses to show you a property in a particular neighborhood or discourages you from considering a neighborhood because of its racial makeup.
- The mortgage or insurance company has a policy that disqualifies you from a loan or policy, i.e. “We don’t insure properties with flat roofs.”
- Threats, coercion, or intimidation directed towards anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others in exercising those rights.



REPORT DISCRIMINATION!

By reporting discrimination, you protect your right to housing and ensure that other people have access to housing on a nondiscriminatory basis.

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