

DISABILITY

If you are a person with a disability, whether visible or invisible (mental, physical, or emotional) a potential or current housing provider may not ask about the nature or severity of your disabilities. Nor may anyone in the housing transaction ask about the disabilities of your family members, visitors, acquaintances, or friends.

If a tenant's disabilities require an exception to a policy/rule or a change to a structural element, in order to use and enjoy the dwelling, the tenant may make a **reasonable accommodation request** (rule/policy) or a **reasonable modification request** (structural) of the housing provider. For example, in a complex with first-come-first-serve parking, a person with mobility disabilities may ask for a reserved parking space. Generally, with accommodations, there is little to no cost involved. However with modifications (installing a grab bar, ramp, etc.) the tenant will usually pay for the cost of the modification and can be asked to have it done in a workman like manner. It is also possible the tenant may be required by the housing provider to return the structure to it's original state.



VETERAN/MILITARY STATUS

Being active military or an honorably discharged veteran should not limit your housing options. "Sorry, I can't rent to you —you could get called up and not finish the lease term" is housing discrimination. If you are called up, you have the right to a lease release without financial penalty. If you have a service-related disability, you may also ask a housing provider for a reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification as described above.

MARITAL STATUS

In WA state, housing providers are prohibited from denying rentals or imposing different terms or conditions on tenants because a person is single, married, widowed, separated or divorced. "Sorry, we would like to rent to you, but we'd like a nice, professional, married couple in our home" may lead to a housing discrimination complaint.

A person's ability to rent a place should be based on the application criteria, passing the tenant screening, (credit report, criminal background, rental history check) and meeting the financial obligations of the unit. The property should be listed and advertised only by it's features (bedrooms, baths, garage, deck, etc.) not by the "type" of people the housing provider prefers (adults, couples, females only, etc.).

If you think you have been discriminated against in a housing transaction, contact:



NORTHWEST FAIR
HOUSING ALLIANCE

35 W. Main Ave, Suite 250,
Spokane, WA 99201
Ph 509-325-2665
1-800-FAIR (3247)
Fax: 1-866-376-6308
www.nwfairhouse.org

We may be able to advise you of your options.
Our services are free.



Fair Housing Rights



NORTHWEST FAIR
HOUSING ALLIANCE

"Working to ensure equal housing for all"

(509)-325-2665
1-800-200-FAIR (3247)
www.nwfairhouse.org

Fair Housing: It's Your Right!

FEDERAL

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion
- Sex
- Disability
- Familial Status (children in family)

WA STATE

- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation/ Gender Identity
- Veteran/Military Status
- Immigration / Citizenship

As a tenant in Washington State, the federal Fair Housing Act (FHA), provides you protection, equal opportunity, and discrimination free housing on the basis of: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, & familial status. In WA State, the Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD) gives you additional housing protections for: marital status, sexual orientation/gender identity, veteran/military status, and immigration / citizenship status.

The FHA and WLAD cover all parts of your housing transaction: your housing search, application & screening, the rental agreement, obtaining renter's insurance, the terms& conditions of your tenancy, lease renewal, termination of tenancy and the vacating process.

If you pass the housing provider's screening criteria, and are able to pay the deposits, rent and associated fees advertised, you should be free to choose the housing that suits you and/or your family best.



RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN



Being denied housing, restricted to certain areas of an apartment complex or steered to neighborhoods for “people more like you” is housing discrimination. If you call on an ad for housing and everything seems available on the phone, but when you show up in person at the appointment to see the unit it is suddenly no longer available, you may have an allegation of housing discrimination.



RELIGION/CREED

Advertising for a dwelling should exclude all religious or non-religious descriptors or preferences. Ads referring to a specific church as an attraction of the housing could result in a Fair Housing allegation unless all churches in proximity are listed as it could be perceived the housing provider is preferring, encouraging or discouraging “types” of people from applying.

SEX/GENDER

Under the Fair Housing Act, a potential or current housing provider is prohibited from sexually harassing tenants, making sexual advances or asking sexual favors of tenants in exchange for housing, housing amenities (appliance upgrades, a parking space, etc.) or tenant services such as getting repairs made, the utilities maintained, or having a lease renewed.

FAMILIAL STATUS

(minors in the household)

The Fair Housing Act makes it illegal for housing providers to discriminate against prospective or current renters who have a child/children, are expecting a child, or are adopting or fostering children as members of their household.

Overly restrictive rules on children may be perceived as discriminatory since housing standards must be applied equally whether the tenant is an adult or a child.

“No kids’ toys in the hallway” is discriminatory.



Additionally, families with children can not be steered by housing providers into renting only ground floor units (because “kids are noisy”) or denied at properties with special characteristics (because “it is too dangerous for kids”) i.e. busy streets, balconies, saunas, or fireplaces. Finally, housing that is specifically labeled as for “Seniors Only” (55+, 62+) must meet very specific guidelines to be exempt from fair housing familial status protections. A landlord who advertises for “adults only” without meeting all of the criteria to qualify as housing for older persons violates the Fair Housing Act.