

Housing Issues?

WA Residential Landlord Tenant Act (RLTA) RCW 59.18

Civil Rights—Equal Opportunity & Housing Discrimination

ISSUES

- Lease terms
- Repairs not being made
- Landlord entering without notice
- Rent increases
- Electricity/Gas/WSG
- Security deposit not refunded
- Pest infestations
- Habitability
- Terminations
- Notices to comply w/ lease terms: 3,10, 20, 30, 60 day
- Lockouts, utility shut-offs
- Evictions



ISSUES

BECAUSE of a protected class*, a person experiences...

- Termination or eviction
- Denial of a rental, sale, home loan, appraisal, renter's or homeowner's insurance
- Denial of a reasonable accommodation or modification needed for a disability
- Different terms or conditions, privileges, or services
- Steering or segregating
- Discriminatory advertising
- Blockbusting
- Harassment or Retaliation

***Protected Classes:**
Race,
Color,
National Origin,
Religion,
Sex,
Disability,
Family Status,
Sexual Orientation,
Gender Identity,
Marital Status,
Military Status,
Immigration or Citizenship Status
(+ others depending on location)

BEST Practices:

- ⇒ Prevention, research, read the fine print, don't sign anything in haste
- ⇒ Document all transactions in writing, photos, get receipts
- ⇒ Communicate your requests in **writing** (date it, keep a copy for your records, mail a copy certified if necessary) to your landlord or property management company.
- ⇒ If that doesn't work? The remedy is legal action and possibly court.

BEST Practices:

- ⇒ The person filing the complaint has the burden of proof
- ⇒ Document the incident(s) time, date and location, contact information
- ⇒ Gather evidence: rental application, photos, texts, emails, receipts, bills, advertisement, disability verification letter
- ⇒ Be patient, the complaint process will take time for a resolution.

Free help is available:

Low-income
Housing

**Spokane Housing
Authority (SHA)**

This agency distributes housing assistance dollars from the Federal government by providing housing vouchers, owning and managing subsidized rental properties and offering other low income housing assistance programs.

SHA does not answer landlord tenant, legal or fair housing questions.

Ph: [\(509\) 328-2953](tel:5093282953)

Website:
www.spokanehousing.org

Find a Public Housing Authority in your area.

Website:
<http://www.awha.org/find-a-housing-authority.html>

Activism &
Organizing

**Tenant's
Union of WA
State (TU)**

The mission of the Tenants Union (TU) is to create housing justice through empowerment-based education, outreach, leadership development, organizing, and advocacy.

This agency helps tenant's to organize and work together to build power in the movement for tenants' rights and housing justice.

Hotline:
(206) 723-0500

Website:
www.tenantsunion.org

Legal Help

**Northwest Justice
Project (NJP)**

Attorneys provide free legal services in non-criminal matters for low-income people in WA State.

Hotline (CLEAR):
1-888-201-1014

Sr. Hotline(60+):
1-888-387-7111

Hotline Hours:
M-F, 9:15am to 12:15 noon

NJP **website** for self-help information:
www.washingtonlawhelp.org

Sample letters, downloadable guidance, videos, multilingual resources.

Apply online for NJP's legal help:
<https://nwjustice.org/get-legal-help>

Housing
Discrimination

**Northwest Fair
Housing Alliance
(NWFHA)**

Northwest Fair Housing Alliance provides education, outreach and advocacy for persons who are experiencing housing discrimination.

NWFHA helps people file housing discrimination complaints with HUD & WSHRC and supports them through the process. NWFHA also assists people with disabilities request reasonable accommodations, or modifications with their housing provider.

Phone:
(509) 325-2665
1-800-200 FAIR (3247)

Websites:
www.nwfairhouse.org
www.sexdiscriminationinhousing.org

Civil Rights
Complaints

**WA State Human
Rights Commission
(WSHRC)**

Washington State Administrative agency that investigates complaints of housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran/military status, citizenship and immigration status.

Phone:
1-800-233-3247

Website:
www.hum.wa.gov

Housing
Discrimination

**Housing & Urban
Development
(HUD)**

Federal Administrative agency where you can file a civil rights complaint of discrimination in your housing transactions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (includes sexual orientation/gender identity), disability, and familial status.

Phone:
1-800-669-9777 or
1-800-877-8339

Website:
www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported in part by funding under a grant with the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. NWFHA is solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication.