Fair Housing for Families with Children

Examples of Discriminatory Rules:

“All children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian in the pool.”

“All children must be accompanied by an adult anywhere in the complex.”

“Children have a curfew of 9:00 p.m.”

“Children should not leave toys in common areas.”

If You Experience Discrimination

If you believe you have experienced housing discrimination:

• Contact a local fair housing agency and report the discrimination

• Make a chronological list of events related to the discrimination, with dates, locations, people present, and important details about what happened

• Keep any records related to the discrimination including text messages, emails, notices, rules, leases, letters, advertisements, and photographs

• Create a list of people with their contact information who may have knowledge about the discrimination and could be witnesses

Other Signs of Discrimination:

“You should look elsewhere, where there are more children, parks, schools, or playgrounds.”

Advertisements:

“no children”

“adults only”

“no kids allowed”

“That’s the building for the families with children.”

“You can’t rent a 1-bedroom unit since you and your partner have a baby. You’ll need a two-bedroom unit.”

Northwest Fair Housing Alliance

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

Our services are free.

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**Fair Housing Act**

The federal Fair Housing Act “FHA” prohibits discrimination in housing based on a person’s race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status and disability.

**Who is protected?**

Familial status discrimination occurs when a landlord, property manager, real estate agent, or another resident treats someone differently because of the presence of children under the age of 18.

This protection covers households in which one or more minor children live with:

- a parent,
- a person with legal custody, or
- a person with written permission from a parent or person with legal custody

Persons who are pregnant or in the process of securing custody of a minor are also protected for familial status discrimination.

**Common Violations of the FHA**

Examples of familial status discrimination:

**Advertising** a limitation on children

**Steering** families to or away from housing or neighborhoods

**Segregating** families with children to specific buildings or floors

**Refusing to rent, sell or negotiate** with a family with children

**Charging additional rent, deposits, or fees** because a household has children

**Limiting occupancy** to 1 person per bedroom

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**Exemptions**

**Health and Safety:** Housing providers can set limited health and safety rules for children with respect to facilities such as swimming pools, hot tubs, and gym equipment. Such rules must be drafted to allow as much access as possible while assuring safety.

**Housing for Older Persons** is exempt from FHA prohibitions on familial status discrimination:

- **55+ Communities:** if least 80% of occupied units have one person 55 or older; the community publishes and adhere to policies and procedures that demonstrate the intent to be housing for persons 55 and over; and resident ages are verified every 2 years.

- **62+ Communities:** intended for and solely occupied by persons 62 or older, private market or subsidized

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To file a complaint in Eastern / Central WA call:
Northwest Fair Housing Alliance
(509)-325-2665 / 1-800-FAIR (3247)