Housing Discrimination: Are You the Victim of Unlawful Housing Discrimination?

Housing Discrimination

Are you the victim of unlawful housing discrimination? You have rights! Fair housing is your right.

What type of housing is covered or exempt?

The Fair Housing Act (FHA) covers most housing. In some circumstances, the Act exempts owner-occupied buildings with no more than four units, single-family housing sold or rented without the use of a broker, and housing operated by organizations and private clubs that limit occupancy to members.

Based on your protected class status, the Fair Housing Act says it may be against
the law for a landlord to:

• Refuse to sell or rent you housing.
• Set different terms, conditions, or privileges when it comes to the sale or rental of a dwelling.
• Tell you housing is not available, when in reality it is.
• Only show you apartments in a certain neighborhood.
• Provide you with different housing services or facilities.
• Advertise housing property only available to certain groups of people.
• Deny you property insurance.
• Refuse to let you make reasonable modifications to your dwelling or common use areas if it is necessary for you to be able to use and enjoy your dwelling. These modifications are usually at your expense (In many cases, the tenant will have to return modifications to original state, but there are exceptions).
• Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, rules, or services if it is necessary for you to use the housing on an equal level as people who do not have a disability.
• Intimidate, harass, coerce or interfere with someone exercising or assisting you with your fair housing rights.

How do you recognize housing discrimination?

Housing discrimination doesn't always mean having the door slammed in your face or a bigoted remark directed your way. Unsuspecting renters or home buyers may be politely turned away from the housing of their choice, even though they are qualified. The following is an example of possible discrimination:

• A Salt Lake City woman was denied housing several times for being a single mother with children, having been asked “How are you going to be able to provide rent every month?” and told “I have had bad experiences renting to single moms.” She had a very hard time finding a place for her family to live because landlords were violating the Fair Housing Act and discriminating against her because of her sex and familial status. She contacted the Fair Housing team at the DLC and is now living comfortably where she chooses.

What is housing discrimination and who is protected?

Housing discrimination is when an individual or family is treated unequally based on their:

• Race
• Color
• National Origin
• Religion
• Sex
• Familial Status (if you are expecting children, or have children under the age of 18)
• Disability
• Source of Income, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity are also protected in the state of Utah

If you believe your rights have been violated…

Maintain a record of all correspondence with the renter or agency. Contact the Disability Law Center. After your information is received, the Disability Law Center will contact you to discuss your concerns. If you have or are currently experiencing housing discrimination, contact the Disability Law Center.
The Disability Law Center (DLC) is a private, non-profit organization, designated by the governor as Utah's Protection and Advocacy agency. The DLC believes in a society where abilities, rather than disabilities, are recognized; all people have an equal opportunity to participate; and where all people are treated with equity, dignity, and respect. We work toward our vision by enforcing and advancing the legal rights, choices, and opportunities of Utahns with disabilities. DLC services are available free of charge statewide, regardless of income, legal status, language, or place of residence.

If you have further questions, please contact us. Even though our focus is on cases that can help as many people as possible - because time and resources are limited - we at least offer information and/or referral options to everyone who contacts us. Materials are also available in alternative formats such as audio, large-print, Braille and Spanish. Call (800) 662-9080 or apply for help online, and our staff will contact you within 1-3 business days.