

# FAIR HOUSING LAWS

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 with the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, is called the Fair Housing Act. As a landlord or housing provider it is YOUR responsibility to follow fair housing laws. Pennsylvania also has housing anti-discrimination laws that pertain to you. Here's some basic information about how the Federal Fair Housing Act works.

## What Housing Is Covered?

The Fair Housing Act 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.

## What Is Prohibited?

**In the Sale and Rental of Housing:** It is illegal to take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap:

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Refuse to negotiate for housing
- Make housing unavailable
- Deny a dwelling
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale, or rental
- For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting) or
- Deny anyone access to or membership in a facility or service (such as a multiple listing service) related to the sale or rental of housing.
- Threaten, coerce, intimidate or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise that right
- Advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or handicap. This prohibition against discriminatory advertising applies to single-family and owner-occupied housing that is otherwise exempt from the Fair Housing Act.

## Additional Protections for people with disabilities:

- Landlords must let a person with a disability make reasonable modifications to their dwelling or common use areas, at their expense, if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.
- Landlords can not refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.

## Housing Opportunities for Families

Unless a building or community qualifies as housing for older persons, it may not discriminate based on familial status. That is, it may not discriminate against families in which one or more children under 18 live. Familial status protection also applies to pregnant women and anyone securing legal custody of a child under 18. Exemption: Housing for older persons is exempt from the prohibition against familial status discrimination if it is occupied solely by persons who are 62 or older or it houses at least one person who is 55 or older in at least 80 percent of the occupied units, and adheres to a policy that demonstrates an intent to house persons who are 55 or older.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FAIR HOUSING LAWS OR TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT A COMPLAINT OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION CALL:**

**THE FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY AT 215.576.7711  
[www.fairhousingmontco.org](http://www.fairhousingmontco.org)**