

THE MISSION OF THE FAIR HOUSING JUSTICE CENTER (FHJC) IS TO:

- Challenge systemic housing discrimination
- Advocate policies that reverse the harm caused by systemic discrimination and promote open and inclusive communities
- Strengthen local, state, and national fair housing enforcement

OUR SERVICES

The Fair Housing Justice Center assists individuals and organizations with allegations of illegal housing discrimination by providing counseling on fair housing rights, investigative assistance, and referrals to cooperating attorneys and/or administrative agencies on a case-by-case basis.

The burden of proving illegal housing discrimination occurred is always on the victim of discrimination. The FHJC uses “testing” as one tool to investigate housing discrimination complaints. The FHJC employs fair housing testers who have been trained to pose as prospective renters and buyers of real estate for the purpose of gathering evidence. Testing can often provide the vital corroborative evidence needed to prove an allegation of housing discrimination.

“DON’T LET HOUSING DISCRIMINATION TURN YOU AROUND!”

CONTACT US

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The Fair Housing Justice Center is a non-profit organization serving New York City and Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties.

If you have questions or concerns about housing discrimination, contact the Fair Housing Justice Center. Language interpretation services are available. Our counseling and investigative services are free regardless of income and available to the general public.



FAIR HOUSING
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CENTER
www.fairhousingjustice.org





WHAT ARE FAIR HOUSING LAWS?

Federal, state, and local fair housing laws require equal access to housing for all. The federal Fair Housing Act, New York State Human Rights Law, and New York City Human Rights Law prohibit discrimination in the rental, sale, financing, and appraisal of housing. These laws apply to property owners, real estate brokers, rental managers, building superintendents, cooperative and condominium boards, financial institutions, and many others who provide housing-related services.

WHAT ARE THE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATING FAIR HOUSING LAWS?

Penalties may include injunctions, money damages, civil fines, and attorneys' fees. Fair housing injunctions can include obtaining the housing you were denied, ordering a violator to stop discriminating, changing business policies and practices, training employees, and taking other steps to prevent future discrimination.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? If you have questions or suspect that you have been discriminated against, help is available. Contact the Fair Housing Justice Center.

HOW ARE PEOPLE PROTECTED FROM HOUSING DISCRIMINATION?

Under the federal Fair Housing Act, it is illegal to discriminate because of:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Sex
- Religion
- Disability
- *Physical or Mental*
- Familial Status
- *Presence of children in your household*

The New York State Human Rights Law additionally prohibits discrimination on the basis of:

- Age
- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Military Status

The New York City Human Rights Law includes most federal and state protected characteristics and also prohibits discrimination on the basis of:

- Lawful Occupation
- Gender Identity
- Alienage / Citizenship Status
- Domestic Partnership Status
- Lawful Source of Income

WHAT HOUSING PRACTICES ARE PROHIBITED BY FAIR HOUSING LAWS?

Fair housing laws prohibit the following activities:

- Refusing to rent, sell, finance, insure, or negotiate for housing, or otherwise making housing unavailable
- Discriminating in the terms or conditions of housing or providing unequal services and facilities
- Misrepresenting the availability of housing
- Steering individuals into or away from a certain neighborhood, building, or part of a building
- Making or publishing a discriminatory statement or advertisement
- Refusing to make reasonable changes to housing policies or services or permit physical modifications when necessary because of a person's disability
- Failing to design and construct new (built after 1991) multifamily housing (for sale or rent) to comply with fair housing accessibility requirements so that the housing is accessible to persons with physical disabilities
- Harassing, threatening, intimidating, or coercing anyone, including sexual harassment

Fair housing laws also forbid retaliation because someone has:

- Made or assisted others to make a housing discrimination complaint
- Refused to comply with discriminatory policies
- Helped others to exercise their fair housing rights

If you live outside of New York City, there may be other local laws that provide you with additional protections.