

## I Want to Join the Fair Housing Justice Center (FHJC)

Signature

Date

Name (Print)

FHJC Membership Categories: (please select one)

Premier (\$10,000 or more)  Performing (\$1,000-\$9,999)

Sustaining (\$100-\$1,000)  Supporting (\$25-\$99)

I am paying my annual membership dues in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(The FHJC, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax exempt organization)

### METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check (Payable to "FHJC")

Credit Card (Please pay online at [www.fairhousingjustice.org](http://www.fairhousingjustice.org))

As a member, you will receive the FHJC Opening Acts e-newsletter, announcements about special events, and news releases.

My contact information is provided below:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

HOME PHONE:

CELL PHONE:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

I am interested in volunteering to help with the following activities:

Planning FHJC's Acting for Justice Awards Benefit

Participating in Outreach Presentations on Fair Housing

Helping with Fundraising Events

Working on Fair Housing Policy or Legislative Issues

Distributing Fair Housing Materials

Serving on the FHJC Board of Directors and/or  
a Standing Board Committee

Representing FHJC Clients as a Cooperating Attorney

Please return this card by mail to:

Fair Housing Justice Center  
5 Hanover Sq. 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10004

## About The Fair Housing Justice Center



## “Acting for Justice”

- **Eliminating Housing Discrimination**
- **Promoting Open, Accessible, and Inclusive Communities**
- **Strengthening Enforcement of Fair Housing Laws**

**The Fair Housing Justice Center (FHJC), a non-profit civil rights organization, is dedicated to eliminating housing discrimination; promoting open, accessible, and inclusive communities; and strengthening the enforcement of fair housing laws.** The FHJC serves the five boroughs of New York City and the seven surrounding New York counties of Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester.

In order to advance its mission in the New York region, the FHJC:

- Provides fair housing counseling, investigative assistance (testing), and legal referrals to individuals and organizations with housing discrimination complaints;
- Implements proactive systemic testing investigations to remove discriminatory barriers to housing;
- Promotes policies that foster more open, accessible, and inclusive communities; and
- Conducts outreach activities aimed at increasing public awareness about fair housing rights.
- The FHJC also provides training and technical assistance to other civil rights enforcement agencies and organizations throughout the nation in order to upgrade and strengthen enforcement of fair housing laws.

FHJC's efforts to identify and document illegal housing discrimination have resulted in more vigorous enforcement of fair housing laws, opening up thousands of housing opportunities to populations previously excluded and the recovery of millions in damages and civil penalties. Most importantly, relief obtained in fair housing cases can stop the unlawful discrimination and change the policies and practices of housing providers, ensuring that consumers receive fair treatment in the future.



## What You Can Do To Help The FHJC

**If you agree with the mission of the FHJC and support our efforts to fight illegal housing discrimination and create more open, accessible, and inclusive communities, join us!** Fill out the information card on the back side of this brochure and let us know that you support the FHJC. Please make a contribution to the FHJC to support our ongoing fair housing work. Finally, check off activities that you would like to become involved in as a member.

**We all have a responsibility to make sure that housing in our community is open and equally available to everyone.**

**For Help With Housing Discrimination, Please Contact the Fair Housing Justice Center**



### Fair Housing Justice Center (FHJC)

5 Hanover Square, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10004  
Phone: (212) 400-8201  
Fax: (212) 400-8203

Email: [fhjc@fairhousingjustice.org](mailto:fhjc@fairhousingjustice.org)  
[www.fairhousingjustice.org](http://www.fairhousingjustice.org)

*(Language interpretation services are available.)*



# About Your Fair Housing Rights

## What Are Fair Housing Laws?

### Fair housing laws protect all of us from housing discrimination.

Federal, state, and local fair housing laws prohibit discrimination in the sale, rental, insuring, and financing of housing.

## Who Is Protected?

### Housing discrimination is illegal when it is based on any of the following protected characteristics:

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion
- Sex
- Familial Status
- Disability

The New York State Human Rights Law includes the federally protected characteristics above and also prohibits discrimination based on:

- Sexual Orientation
- Marital Status
- Age
- Military Status

The New York City Human Rights Law includes all of the federal and state protected characteristics (except Military Status) and additionally prohibits discrimination based on:

- Gender Identity
- Lawful Occupation
- Alienage/Citizenship Status
- Lawful Source of Income (including housing subsidies)
- Domestic Partnership

Other localities within the New York region have fair housing laws and, while most include the federal protected characteristics, there are some differences. The Nassau County Human Rights Law also protects people on the basis of source of income, including rental subsidies. The Suffolk County Human Rights Law includes protection based on alienage/citizenship. The Westchester County Human Rights Law adds protections based on alienage/citizenship and domestic violence, sexual abuse, and stalking.

## What Conduct Is Prohibited By Fair Housing Laws?

### Discrimination can take many forms and occur at different stages of a housing transaction. Here is a partial list of practices that are prohibited under fair housing laws:

- Refusing to rent, sell, insure, or finance housing, or refusing to negotiate for housing, or otherwise making housing unavailable
- Advertising or making any statement that indicates a preference, limitation, or discrimination
- Misrepresenting the availability of housing
- Steering individuals into or away from certain buildings, parts of buildings, or neighborhoods to segregate populations
- Discriminating in the terms or conditions of housing or providing unequal services and facilities
- Refusing to provide a reasonable accommodation by altering rules, policies, practices, or services for persons with disabilities
- Failing to design and construct new multifamily housing built since 1991 in an accessible manner
- Refusing to allow a reasonable modification to the premises for persons with disabilities
- Harassing or failing to take corrective action regarding complaints about harassment

Threatening, coercing, intimidating, interfering with or retaliating against a person for asserting his or her fair housing rights or for assisting others to exercise their fair housing rights

Housing providers may adopt policies and qualifications for prospective home buyers and renters provided these policies 1) are applied in a uniform and neutral manner to all applicants; 2) do not discriminate based on any of the protected characteristics; and 3) do not have the effect of discriminating against groups of people based on any of the protected characteristics.

## What Remedies Are Available Under Fair Housing Laws?

Fair housing laws open doors, break down barriers, and repair the harm caused by discriminatory housing practices. In general, when someone prevails with a housing discrimination complaint, the following types of remedies and penalties are available:

- **Court orders or injunctions** to stop the illegal discrimination. These orders can require a housing provider to take steps to ensure discrimination will not occur in the future, such as adopting non-discriminatory policies, providing training for agents, affirmative advertising, and similar activities.
- **Monetary compensation** to be paid to the victim of discrimination for out-of-pocket expenses, economic loss, lost housing opportunity, emotional distress, and other damages.
- **Punitive damages and civil penalties** to punish the discriminating parties and deter others in the community from discriminating in the future. Punitive damages are paid to the victim of discrimination. A civil penalty is a monetary fine paid to the government.
- **Attorney fees and costs** can, in most cases, be recovered by prevailing plaintiffs in fair housing cases.

In situations where people have been illegally denied housing, harassed, or threatened with an eviction or non-renewal of a lease for discriminatory reasons, court orders have been issued that enable individuals or families to obtain the housing sought or remain in their current housing. If you have questions about possible remedies available under fair housing laws, please contact the FHJC.



## What Can Be Done To Stop Housing Discrimination?

Reporting housing discrimination is the first step to ending it. When discriminatory housing practices are encountered, contact the FHJC as soon as possible. The FHJC provides assistance to individuals and organizations with allegations of illegal housing discrimination. FHJC intake personnel can help sort out the facts, interview witnesses, review documents, and counsel individuals about their rights and options under all of the fair housing laws.



FHJC services are provided free of charge and without regard to income.

In some instances, the FHJC may be able to gather additional information by conducting a fair housing testing investigation. Fair housing testing refers to the use of individuals who pose as prospective renters

or buyers of real estate for the purpose of gathering information which may indicate whether a housing provider is complying with fair housing laws. Sometimes, testing evidence enables a victim of discrimination to meet his or her burden of proving that unlawful discrimination occurred.

The FHJC can also assist with referrals to government enforcement agencies and to cooperating attorneys on a case-by-case basis.

*See the back of this brochure to learn how you can help fight housing discrimination.*