

FAIR HOUSING FOR HOME SEEKERS

Housing Discrimination Is Illegal

Protected Classes

It is illegal to discriminate based on a person's race, color, religion, national origin, gender (sex), disability or familial status (which protect women who are pregnant and families with children). The State of Missouri also prohibits discrimination based on ancestry. In addition the City of St. Louis prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and source of income. The city of St. Charles also prohibits all of the above and has added age as it relates to employment, public assistance recipient, and sexual orientation.

Recognizing Discrimination

Housing discrimination come in many forms. Sometimes it is blatant, for example when a landlord says that he doesn't rent to families with children. Most often, discrimination is subtle. A real estate agent may suggest to clients that they wouldn't feel "comfortable" in a neighborhood because of its racial makeup. Persons with disabilities are sometimes asked about medications or treatment. Home seekers may be victims of "voice profiling," when a housing provider assesses a person's race or ethnicity over the phone and then denies them housing. Women are sometimes sexually harassed by landlords. People of

color, women, and people with disabilities are sometimes targeted by lenders who quote them higher interest rates or unfavorable terms for a mortgage. All of these practices are illegal.

For Person with Disabilities

It is illegal for anyone to deny housing or limit the choice of housing because you have a mental or physical disability, a history of a disability, or because people think you are disabled. Landlords must give you permission to make physical changes to your home (such as a ramp) if needed, but are not generally responsible for the cost. Landlords must make reasonable exceptions to rules that interfere with your ability to live comfortably in your home. For example, you may request an extra key so that a friend or social worker can visit you. Requests for accommodations should be put in writing.

Investigating Discrimination

Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing Opportunity council, (EHOC) helps people who have been discriminated against by conducting an investigation. In some cases, EHOC uses the technique of "testing" in which individuals are sent to apply for housing who have the same qualifications but are of a different race, national origin or other protected class. EHOC compares the treatment of the testers to see if discrimination has taken place.

Reporting Discrimination

The first step is to contact EHOC who can counsel you, investigate your case, and assist you in pursuing your legal rights. Anyone who has been injured can file a complaint under the Fair Housing Act. Individuals who have been denied housing because of their race, color, religion, national origin, gender (sex), disability or familial status (which protect women who are pregnant and families with children) may contact the EHOC. The State of Missouri also prohibits discrimination based on ancestry. In addition the City of St. Louis prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and source of income. The city of St. Charles also prohibits all of the above and has added age as it relates to employment, public assistance recipient, and sexual orientation.

A person who has experienced discrimination has a year to file a complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and two years to file a lawsuit.



**US Dept. of Housing and Urban Dev.
St. Louis Field Office of Fair Housing and
Equal Opportunity is (314) 418-5404.
Robert A Young Federal Bldg.
1222 Spruce Street, St. Louis, MO 63103.**



Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing Opportunity Council

1027 South Vandeventer Avenue, 4th Floor
St. Louis, MO 63310
(314) 534-5800
Email: ehocer@aol.com
Web: www.ehocstl.org

For the hearing impaired Mo Relay
(800) 735-2966

EHOC's Mission is work to ensure equal access to housing for all people through education, counseling, investigation and enforcement.

MO Commission on Human Rights

St. Louis: 314-340-7590

Toll Free Complaint Hotline:

877-781-4236

Develops, recommends, and implements ways to prevent and eliminate discrimination

Missouri NRCS Civil Rights Committee

Civil Rights Officer

[JR Flores](#), State Conservationist

(573) 876-0901

To provide feedback and recommendations on equal opportunity and civil rights programs



Department of Community Dev.
200 N. Second Street, STE 303
St. Charles, MO 63301

FAIR HOUSING Your Rights As Home Seekers

This pamphlet is provided by:

City of St. Charles Fair Housing Commission

