

FAIR HOUSING

It's Your Right



CITY OF LANCASTER, OHIO

Community Development
Department

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Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Law) prohibits discrimination on the basis of color, religion, race, sex or national origin in the sale, financing or rental of housing.

The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 expands the protection of Title VIII to handicap and familial status. The act also establishes an administrative and judicial enforcement mechanism for cases where discriminatory housing practices can not be resolved informally, and provides for monetary penalties in cases where housing discrimination is found.

The Fair Housing Act, and its amendments, **prohibit discrimination** in housing because of:

RACE OR COLOR

NATIONAL ORIGIN

RELIGION

SEX

FAMILIAL STATUS

*(The presence of children under the age of 18
living with parent or legal custodian;
or pregnant women)*

HANDICAP

Please Note: Housing need not be made available to a person who is a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or who currently uses illegal drugs.



Additional Protection if You Have a Disability

If you, or someone associated with you, has a physical or mental disability (including, but not limited to hearing, mobility and visual impairments, chronic alcoholism, chronic mental illness, aids and mental retardation) that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or you have a record of such a disability, or are regarded as having such a disability, it is illegal to:

Refuse to let you make reasonable modifications to your dwelling at your expense, if necessary, for the handicapped person to use the unit. The landlord may, however, permit changes only if you agree to restore the property to its original condition when you move.

Example: *You need grab bars to use your bathtub. At your own expense, the landlord permits you to reinforce the interior of the wall and install grab bars. When you move, the landlord requests that the grab bars be removed. This is reasonable.*

The landlord requests that the reinforcements be taken out of the interior of the wall. This is unreasonable, you are not required to do so.

Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services, if necessary, for the handicapped person to use the unit.

Example: *A building with a "NO PETS" policy must allow a visually impaired tenant to keep a guide dog.*



IT IS ILLEGAL for anyone to advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on color, race, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap. This prohibition applies to all housing and housing related services.

In addition, 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).
- 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.
- Refuse to make a mortgage loan.
- Refuse to provide information regarding loans.
- Impose different terms or conditions of a loan.
- Discriminate in appraising property.
- Refuse to purchase a loan.
- Set different terms or conditions for purchasing a loan.



If you think you have been illegally discriminated against, you may file a complaint through the City of Lancaster's Community Development Department at (740) 687-6663.

You will have the option of filing a discrimination complaint form with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), or the Lancaster Community Development Department's office may attempt to mediate the situation for you. You have one year after the alleged violation to file a complaint with HUD, but you should file it as soon as possible.

If HUD investigates your complaint and finds reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, you will be informed and an administrative hearing will be held. There is no cost to you. Attorneys with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will litigate on your behalf. If a finding of discrimination occurs, the guilty party can be ordered to:

- Compensate you for actual damages including humiliation, pain and suffering.
- Provide injunctive or other equitable relief, for example, the housing will be made available to you.
- Pay the federal government a civil penalty to vindicate the public interest. The maximum penalties are \$10,000 for a first violation and \$50,000 for a third violation within seven years.
- Pay reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

You may choose to have your case decided in federal district court within two years of an alleged violation. The attorney general will file a suit and litigate it on your behalf. The district court can order relief and award actual damages, attorney's fees and costs. In addition, the court can award punitive damages.



The purpose of this pamphlet is to summarize your rights to fair housing. The fair housing act and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's regulations contain more detail and technical information.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development address in Washington is:

***Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street, SW - Room 5204
Washington, D.C. 20410-2000
(202) 708-1112***

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's regional office for Ohio is:

***Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO)
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
77 West Jackson Boulevard, Room 2101
Chicago, IL 60604-3507
(312) 353-7776***

The address of the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity employment opportunity division of the Columbus field office of Housing and Urban Development is:

***Division of Fair Housing and
Equal Employment Opportunity
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
200 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 469-5737***



If you feel you have been illegally discriminated against in the sale or rental of housing, you should contact your local fair housing agency.

The local fair housing agency for the city of Lancaster is:

City of Lancaster
Community Development Department
111 South Broad Street
Suite 217
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
(740) 687-6663



For further information call the toll-free fair housing complaint hotline;

1-800-669-9777

Hearing impaired persons may call (TDD):

1-800-927-9275

To file electronically, visit: www.hud.gov

