

OUR MISSION

We promote fair housing and diverse communities, and work to eliminate housing discrimination in Northeast Ohio, by providing effective research, education and advocacy.

Since 1983, the Housing Center has promoted equal access to housing and diverse communities for residents of Northeast Ohio with:

Research

- Analyses of Impediments to Fair Housing
- Community Lending Factbooks
- Reports on Local Occupancy Codes
- Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Ohio Mortgage Lending
- Obtaining and Maintaining Housing for People with Mental Health Disabilities
- Landlord Training Manuals, and
- The State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio

Education and Outreach

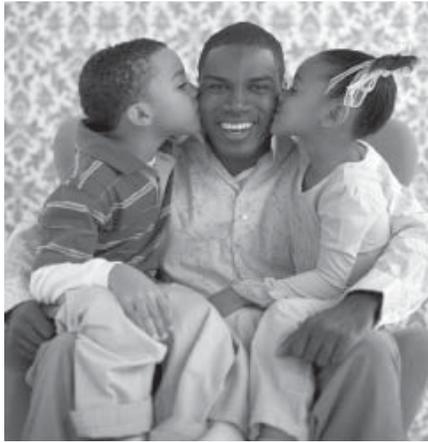
- Trainings for housing professionals
- Programs for housing buyers and renters in English and Spanish
- "Street Teams" for tabling and community events
- Speakers Bureau available for presentations
- Brochures in English, Spanish and Arabic

Enforcement

- Monitor rental, sales, homeowners insurance, and lending markets for discriminatory practices

Advocacy

- Propose and enforce effective fair housing laws
- Facilitate the Greater Cleveland Fair Housing Consortium
- Collaborate with national, state, and local organizations



The Housing Center
Housing Research & Advocacy Center

3631 Perkins Avenue, Suite 3A-2

Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Phone: (216) 361-9240

Fax: (216) 426-1290

Email: info@thehousingcenter.org

www.thehousingcenter.org



This pamphlet is intended to convey information. Nothing in this pamphlet should be relied upon as legal advice, nor should this pamphlet be regarded as creating an attorney-client relationship.

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FAIR HOUSING

For families with children



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Who is Protected?

Federal and state fair housing laws make it illegal to discriminate on the basis of familial status – the presence of children under the age of 18. This protection covers households in which one or more minor children live with:

- A parent
- A person who has legal custody (including guardianship) of a minor child or children
- The designee of a parent or legal custodian, with written permission of the parent or legal custodian

Familial status protection also extends to pregnant women and any person securing legal custody of a minor child (including adoptive or foster parents).

Exemptions

Some senior housing facilities and communities are exempt from liability for familial status discrimination. If a facility or community is designated as “62 and older” (where all residents are at least 62 years of age) or “55 and older” (where at least 80% of the units have at least one occupant who is 55 years of age or older) it may be exempt and may be allowed to prohibit children under the age of 18.

In addition, some federally subsidized housing may be subject to additional requirements. Contact the Housing Center for more details.

What is Prohibited?

These actions are illegal if they are based on familial status:

- Refuse to rent, sell or negotiate for housing
- Set different terms or conditions, or provide different services or access to facilities

- Make housing unavailable or otherwise restrict choice
- Discriminate in advertising by listing limitations or preferences
- Refuse to provide information regarding homeowners’ insurance or mortgage loans
- Refuse to make or purchase a loan
- Refuse to provide homeowners or renters insurance
- Impose different terms or conditions in a loan, such as different interest rates or fees
- Threaten, coerce, intimidate, or interfere with anyone exercising their fair housing rights

Possible Signs of Discrimination

- “We don’t want any children here.”
- “Each child must have their own bedroom.”
- “Your children cannot use the pool.”
- “We put all the families with children on the first floor.”
- “I’m going to raise your rent once that baby is born.”

Where to go for help?

If you think you have been a victim of housing discrimination because of your race, national origin, religion, sex, color, familial status, disability, military status, ancestry, or any other reason, please contact the Housing Research & Advocacy Center for assistance at 216-361-9240.

You can also contact the Ohio Civil Rights Commission at 1-888-278-7101 or online at

Occupancy Codes

A landlord may limit the number of people allowed to live in a home based on an occupancy code. However, attempts to impose rules stricter than allowed by local and federal standards can be discriminatory.

Federal guidelines generally allow at least two persons per bedroom. Most cities and villages in the region have occupancy codes that regulate the number of people that can live in a house or apartment, often based on the total square footage in the unit or the bedrooms.

For more information, contact your local building department, or call the Housing Center.

