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
• Consumer Manual
• 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, Korean, Arabic, and Farsi

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 Collaborative
• Collaborate with national, state, and local organizations
• Provide assistance to victims of housing discrimination

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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In 2010, The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offered clarification on its policy to ensure its programs are open to all eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

The regulations require:

- Equal access in housing funded by HUD and housing that holds a mortgage insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).

This means that owners and operators of HUD-funded housing or housing insured by FHA* are prohibited from:

- Asking about an applicant’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status for the purpose of determining eligibility or otherwise making the housing available.
- Denying an applicant housing based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

*A private housing provider who receives an FHA mortgage loan and who rents the property is prohibited from discriminating or inquiring about a potential renter’s sexual orientation or gender identity since the source of funding for these loans is from HUD.

If a building or program receives federal financial assistance the housing provider cannot discriminate against individuals based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

- **Public Housing**
- **Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)**
- **Subsidized Housing**
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program**
- **Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS**

Examples of Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:

- A housing provider will not rent to two men who are in a relationship, stating that he would not feel comfortable having them as tenants.
- A housing provider harasses a tenant because the tenant is a transgender individual.
- A housing provider who receives federal financial assistance falsely states that nothing is available because of the gender identity of the tenant’s partner.
- A lender will not make a loan to two financially qualified women because they are in a same sex relationship.
- A housing provider evicts a tenant when he finds out the tenant is gay/lesbian/transgender.

Ohio fair housing laws do not currently offer protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity; however, there are many local ordinances which do.

The following municipalities in Northeast Ohio include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes under fair housing laws:

**Sexual Orientation:**
- Brook Park, Cleveland, Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga Heights, East Cleveland, Euclid, Lakewood, Linndale, Maple Heights, Newburgh Heights, North Olmsted, Shaker Heights, University Heights, Warrensville Heights

**Gender Identity:**
- Cleveland, Cleveland Heights, East Cleveland, Euclid, Lakewood, Linndale, Maple Heights, Shaker Heights, University Heights, Warrensville Heights

Where to go for help?

If you think you have been a victim of housing discrimination because of your sexual orientation, gender identity, 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.