

RESOURCE LIST:

FOR HELP WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

Journey Center for Safety and Healing
(216) 391-4357 (HELP)
www.journeyneo.org

FOR FAIR HOUSING COMPLAINTS:

Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research
(216) 361-9240
www.thehousingcenter.org

FOR LEGAL SERVICES:

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland
(216) 687-1900
www.lasclev.org

United Way's 2-1-1 First Call for Help
www.211oh.org

FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES:

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio
www.acluohio.org

FOR DRUG ADDICTION OR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN CUYAHOGA COUNTY:

Alcohol and Drug Addition Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County
(216) 241-3400
www.adamhsc.org

FOR DRUG ADDICTION OR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN LORAIN COUNTY:

Mental Health, Addiction and Recovery Services (MHARS) Board of Lorain County
440-240-7025
www.mharslc.org

FOR INFORMATION ON SHELTERS:

Frontline Services
(216) 623-6555
www.frontlineservice.org



Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research

2728 Euclid Ave., Suite 200
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
✉: advocates@thehousingcenter.org
☎: (216) 361-9240
www.thehousingcenter.org

The mission of the Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research is to protect and expand fair housing rights, eliminate housing discrimination and promote integrated communities. Since 1983, The Fair Housing Center has promoted nondiscrimination in housing and integrated communities for residents of Northeast Ohio with research, education and outreach and advocacy for victims of housing discrimination.



✉: contactus@journeyneo.org
☎: (216) 391-4357 (HELP)
www.journeyneo.org

Journey Center for Safety and Healing's mission is to provide services that foster safety and healing for those affected by child abuse and domestic violence; and to prevent abuse through education, advocacy, and systemic change.



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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 SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Fair Housing Center
for Rights & Research

PROTECTIONS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence (DV) is when one person intentionally causes physical or emotional harm to a partner in an intimate relationship, including sexual assault, physical abuse, and psychological/emotional abuse. It is a crime that occurs in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships, and is used to establish and maintain power and control over another person. More than 4 million women are assaulted by intimate partners each year. While fifteen percent of domestic violence victims are men, domestic violence is a crime that disproportionately affects women and mothers with children.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on protected classes, which are race, color, national origin, religion, **sex, family status, and disability**. The sex protection also prohibits discrimination against survivors of domestic violence and sexual harassment by housing providers, their staff, and neighboring tenants. State of Ohio fair housing laws also include ancestry and military status as protected classes, and some municipalities provide additional protections. In 2021, HUD officially recognized sexual orientation and gender identity as forms of sex discrimination under the federal Fair Housing Act. This means that discrimination in housing due to a person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity is illegal across the entire United States.

Many victims of domestic violence stay with their abusers because they have nowhere else to go. **The Violence Against Women Act** protects victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking from eviction and termination due to their status, in federally subsidized housing programs, including public housing and Housing Choice Voucher participants. Managers of these housing programs are required to maintain strict confidentiality and adopt and implement model emergency transfer plans. These protections are in place to assist victims of domestic violence with safe housing options. No one deserves to be abused and everyone has the right to fair housing.

LANDLORDS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Landlords must understand their responsibilities regarding fair housing laws. It is illegal to discriminate in housing because of someone's sex or gender, family status or one's status as a victim of domestic violence. Some local nuisance ordinances penalize landlords if emergency services are called to a property repeatedly and encourage landlords to "abate the nuisance" (i.e. evict the tenant). When emergency services are called by a person experiencing domestic violence, enforcement of a nuisance ordinance to evict or otherwise penalize the tenant can violate fair housing law. Further, HUD-assisted housing, low-income housing tax credit housing providers are subject to VAWA and must maintain an emergency transfer plan and coordinate emergency transfers when needed due to domestic violence.

COMMON SCENARIOS:

- My abuser went to jail for domestic violence and now I can't pay the rent.
- The neighbors called the police because of screams coming from my apartment, but my abuser ran off before they got there. I was served with an eviction notice for violating the city's nuisance ordinance.
- I called the police on my abuser, but I was charged with child endangerment for having my son in this environment.
- My child told her teacher that her dad hits me, and now I'm getting calls from social services.
- My landlord knows I'm a victim of domestic violence and pressures me for sexual favors to avoid eviction.
- I applied for housing, but once the property manager found out about me being a survivor of domestic violence, my application was denied.
- I have a criminal record due to fighting off my abuser, and now I can't get housing.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

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

You can also contact the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) at 1-888-278-7101 (TTY: 614-752-2391) or online at www.crc.ohio.gov, or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at 1-800-669-9777 (TTY: 1-800-927-9275) or online at www.hud.gov. The OCRC and HUD can also offer assistance with reading and completing HUD forms through interpreters, tapes, and Braille materials.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if a landlord refuses to rent to me because I am a survivor of domestic violence?

That may be a form of illegal sex discrimination. Contact The Fair Housing Center for assistance.

What if by calling the police on my abuser I get evicted?

If your landlord threatens to evict you because of the actions of your abuser, call The Fair Housing Center for help. Nuisance ordinances that punish victims of domestic violence have been found to violate fair housing laws.

My name is not on the lease. How do I get the landlord to change the lease from my abuser's name to mine?

If you are in HUD-assisted housing or rent with a voucher, speak with your property manager about your protections under VAWA. In private housing, your landlord may be able to accommodate your request. Contact The Fair Housing Center for assistance.

I want to keep my children in this school district, so why should I have to move?

You should not have to move. However, it may be necessary for your protection. By seeking help it's possible you will be able to stay and your abuser will be removed.

My landlord is demanding I perform sexual favors for reduced rent. What should I do?

This is sexual harassment, a violation of fair housing laws, and is housing discrimination based on sex. Call The Fair Housing Center and we will talk you through your options and if necessary, help you file a fair housing complaint.