

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

**Fair housing laws protect us from discrimination, both where we live and where we want to live.** As you are searching for housing, it is important for you to understand your rights, and, if a problem arises, to know where to turn for help. The Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research can provide free information and assistance.

It is illegal for a landlord to treat you differently or deny you housing because you belong to a **protected class**, including:

- Race/Color
- National Origin/Ancestry
- Sex (includes sexual orientation & gender identity)
- Disability
- Religion
- Familial Status (includes those who are pregnant or have children under 18)
- Military Status



**Fair Housing Center  
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# HOUSING VOUCHERS AND YOUR RIGHTS



**A RESOURCE FOR HOUSING VOUCHER  
HOLDERS IN NORTHEAST OHIO**



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## WHAT IS SOI DISCRIMINATION?

Source of income — or SOI — discrimination occurs when a housing provider refuses to rent to tenants because they use a voucher, subsidy, or other lawful source of income to help pay their rent.

## PROTECTIONS FOR HOUSING VOUCHER HOLDERS

While SOI discrimination is still legal in some places, many cities in Cuyahoga County offer additional protections in their fair housing ordinances, which may include source of income. Source of income protections prohibit discrimination against families with vouchers.

### CITIES\* IN NORTHEAST OHIO THAT PROHIBIT SOI DISCRIMINATION:

- Akron
- Cleveland Heights
- Linndale
- South Euclid
- University Heights
- Warrensville Heights
- Wickliffe

*\* This information is current as of January 2024.*

## IT IS ILLEGAL FOR A HOUSING PROVIDER TO DO THE FOLLOWING BECAUSE OF YOUR PROTECTED CLASS:

- Refuse to rent, sell, or negotiate for housing
- Make housing unavailable or restrict choice
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of housing
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny that housing is available
- Persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting)
- Deny access to or membership in a facility or service related to the sale or rental of housing
- Retaliate against a person for making a fair housing complaint
- Discriminate in mortgage lending

## EXAMPLES OF DISCRIMINATION:

- Evicting or refusing to rent to someone because they are a survivor of domestic violence
- Blanket criminal history bans on rental ads, including “No Felonies,” “No Sexual Offenders,” or “No Criminal History”
- Making families with children pay a higher security deposit
- Steering a potential renter to a certain unit based on assumptions about their disability-related needs (i.e., encouraging someone who uses a walker live on the first floor)
- Soliciting a tenant for sexual favors in exchange for repairs, services, or rent discounts
- Refusing to make exceptions to usual policies and procedures that a resident needs because of a disability
- Saying “No Section 8, CMHA, or EDEN” in a city with SOI protections

## 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.** Our advocates can provide assistance before you file a formal complaint.

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](http://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](http://www.hud.gov). The OCRC and HUD can also offer assistance with reading and completing HUD forms through interpreters, tapes, and Braille materials.



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## QUESTIONS? CONTACT US.

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