

April is Fair Housing Month!!!

FAIR HOUSING HIGHLIGHT #9

What are fair housing laws?

Fair Housing laws are local, state and federal laws that protect people from housing discrimination in rental, sales, loans, and insurance. In these situations, it is illegal to consider: RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, DISABILITY, SEX, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, FAMILIAL STATUS (having children under 18 in the household), or AGE (over 40).

What are some examples of discriminatory practices?

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Set different terms or conditions for a tenant or a perspective buyer
- Falsely state that a dwelling is not available
- For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting)
- Set different terms or conditions for an insurance policy

Are sexual harassment and hate crimes protected under the Fair Housing Act?

Yes, tenants and people looking for housing are protected from sexual harassment by landlords, property owners, and real estate agents. Hate Crime is also a violation of Fair Housing laws. Examples of hate crime may include coercion, intimidation, threats, or interference with someone's enjoyment of their housing.

What are some remedies under the law?

When a person thinks that he or she may have been injured by a discriminatory housing practice, a complaint can be filed with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, or through a private lawyer. If discrimination is found, it is possible that the respondent will have to pay monetary compensation for actual damages, humiliation, and embarrassment in addition to civil penalties and lawyer fees.

Questions? Call the Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania at 215 576-7711 or visit us online at www.fairhousingrights.org.