

Fair Housing

The 1968 Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination.

You cannot be denied access to a home solely on the basis of color, race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or your familial status (children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18).

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and the Texas state Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) are committed to affirmatively furthering Fair Housing in conjunction with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA).

Affirmatively furthering Fair Housing is a requirement of the CDBG program and TDA requires units of general local governments applying for CDBG funds to successfully affirmatively further Fair Housing.

More details regarding Fair Housing in Texas and the Fair Housing Act may be found on the TDHCA website at the following link: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/housing-center/fair-housing/index.htm>

Fair Housing Facts

In recognition of April as Fair Housing Month, the Department of Housing and Urban Development provides the following facts concerning the Fair Housing Act:

- The Fair Housing Act protects everyone. No one can be denied housing because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability.
- The assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968 prompted passage of Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, known as the Fair Housing Act. The bill was signed by President Lyndon Johnson on April 11, 1968.
- Within one year of its passage, HUD began receiving 1,000 complaints a year. By 1988, complaints leveled off to about 5,000 a year.
- In 1989, additional amendments were implemented to strengthen the Fair Housing Act. They extended the act to cover discrimination based on disability and family status and added new enforcement mechanisms. These new provisions stimulated a dramatic increase in complaints. By the mid-1990's, HUD was receiving 10,000 complaints a year.
- HUD works with some 80 state and local agencies to review and investigate fair housing complaints. In the last 9 years,
- HUD and its partner agencies have resolved nearly 25,000 complaints.
- HUD and its partner agencies found 4,000 cases of real discrimination.
- Two-thirds of the housing discrimination cases investigated by HUD resulted in positive outcomes for the complainant.

Here are some of the protections we enjoy because of the Fair Housing Act:

- Apartment managers cannot deny housing to blind people just because they have seeing eye dogs.
- Apartment buildings with 4 or more units, built after March 13, 1991, must be accessible to people with disabilities. If the building has more than one story, but no elevators, then the ground floor units must be accessible. If the building does have elevators, then all units must be accessible.
- Apartment owners and managers must approve reasonable modifications to apartments and common areas to accommodate people with disabilities, as long as those tenants pay for the modifications.

- It is not permissible to ask whether an applicant for an apartment has a disability or to ask about the nature or severity of the disability.
- An Administrative Law Judge can order landlords who discriminate to pay penalties.
- Mortgage companies cannot discriminate when making loans. HUD is proud of the fact that nearly 120 mortgage lenders have gone a step farther by signing a Fair Lending Agreement, to promote the principles of the Fair Housing Act.

To file a fair housing complaint, contact the Department of Housing and Urban Development toll free at 1-800-669-9777.

Fair Housing Information Sources

The State of Texas is committed to Fair Housing. Following are some of the sources of information and/or assistance:

- Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Room 5116
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410-2000
(202) 708-2878

For the National HUD Discrimination Hotline, call 1-800-669-9777, or for the hearing impaired, call TDD # 1-800-927-9275

- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)Region VI](#)
801 Cherry Street, Unit #45, Suite 2500
Fort Worth, TX 76102
(817) 978-5965
- [Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs](#)
221 East 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701
(512) 475-3976 (main line)

Housing Assistance Council
1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Suite 606
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 842-8600

Fair Housing Links

- [HUD Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity](#)
- [The John Marshall Law School Fair Housing Legal Support Center](#)
- [National Fair Housing Advocate Online](#)

[Fair Housing Institute](#)