

All people are protected under federal, state, and local laws are on the basis of various protected classes

The Federal Fair Housing Act

prohibits discrimination in housing based on these protected classes:

- Race
- Sex
- Color
- Disability
- National Origin
- Familial Status
- Religion (households with children under 18)

*Familial Status protects **all families with children** under the age of eighteen, which includes pregnant women and parents in the process of adopting or securing custody of a child. Children include foster children or grandchildren if he person has legal custody or written consent.*

All families are protected regardless of marital status or number of children.

The **Illinois Human Rights Act** provides additional protections:

- Ancestry
- Marital Status
- Military Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Age (over 40)
- Order of Protection Status
- Unfavorable Military Discharge
- Pregnancy
- Arrest Record
- Source of Income

HOPE Fair Housing Center

Founded in 1968, HOPE Fair Housing Center is the oldest and largest fair housing center in Illinois. HOPE works to create greater housing opportunities for all, and accomplishes this through education, outreach, enforcement, training, and advocacy.

HOPE Fair Housing Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and **does not charge for its services**



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HOPE

Fair Housing Center



Fair Housing for Families

Federal and local laws protect families with children and pregnant women, so that every parent has the right to choose where they want to raise their child and have an equal opportunity to housing.



Housing Discrimination can be blatant or subtle, so all parties should know their rights and responsibilities.

Examples of Familial Status

Discrimination include:

- Advertisements suggest a preference for couples or singles or say "No Children"
- A landlord asking for a higher deposit because you have children
- A real estate agent telling you a certain neighborhood is or isn't better for kids
- A landlord or property manager insists you can only rent units on a certain floor or in a particular part of the building
- Building rules include things such as "No teens loitering after 10 PM"
- Limits on the number of people you can have in the apartment are unreasonable
- A loan officer charging higher interest rates because you or your partner are pregnant

Families can never be evicted because they have children

How HOPE Can Help

If you think you may be a victim of housing discrimination:

- **Contact** HOPE Fair Housing Center.
- **Document** meetings and phone calls with landlords, property managers, real estate agents, loan officers, and insurance agents.
- **Save** all receipts, copies of applications, business cards, and other documents.

All of HOPE's services are FREE!

When appropriate, HOPE can:

- Investigate potential discrimination
- Advocate on your behalf with a housing provider
- Assist in filling a Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) complaint
- Help conciliate your case with the offending party
- Refer your case to attorneys that are experts in fair housing litigation

Legitimate reasons for someone not to rent or sell a dwelling include insufficient income and poor credit history. Whatever policies are in place must be applied to ALL participants.

Occupancy Standards

Housing providers have the right to say how many people can live in a unit. however, any limit that is less than two people per room is considered unreasonable. Size of rooms and total living space should be considered.

Rules

Building rules should apply to all tenants and focus on behavior not status (i.e. teen, child).

Advertisements

Advertisements for housing may never express preference based on one of the protected classes.

Exempt housing

Specific housing designed for older persons is exempt from familial status protection of the Fair Housing Act. Additionally, owner-occupied buildings with four units or less are also exempt from the familial status rule *except in advertising.*