



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

**We Do Business in Accordance with the
Federal Fair Housing Law**

(The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988)

It is illegal to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, marital status*, or sexual orientation*

** in the State of Maryland*

- In the sale or rental of housing or residential lots
- In advertising the sale or rental of housing
- In the financing of housing
- In the provision of real estate brokerage services
- In the appraisal of housing
- Blockbusting is also illegal

Anyone who feels he or she has been discriminated against may file a complaint of housing discrimination:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Washington, D.C. 20410
1-800-669-9777 (Toll Free)
1-800-927-9275 (TDD)

*This brochure is printed by
Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership with
funds provided by
the City of Hagerstown
Community Development Block Grant Program.*

**Landlord and
Property Manager's**

GUIDE TO FAIR HOUSING

Laws and Practices



**HAGERSTOWN
NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP**

21 East Franklin Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-797-0900
www.hagerstownhomestore.org

 Equal Housing Opportunity



THE FAIR HOUSING ACT

The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 prohibits discrimination in housing based on:

Race or Color

Religion

Sex

Handicap

Familial Status

National Origin

In the State of Maryland, the following are also protected classes:

Marital Status

Sexual Orientation

WHAT HOUSING IS COVERED?

The Fair Housing Act covers most housing. Under some circumstances, the Act exempts owner-occupied buildings with no more than four units, single family housing sold or rented without the use of a broker, and housing operated by organizations and private clubs that limit occupancy to members.

WHAT IS PROHIBITED?

In the sale, rental or financing of housing, no one may take any of the following actions based on race, color, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, marital status, or sexual orientation of the person seeking housing:

- ◆ Refuse to rent or sell available housing
- ◆ Advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.

“What is Prohibited?” cont.

This prohibition against discriminatory advertising applies to single family and owner-occupied housing that is otherwise exempt from the Fair Housing Act.

- ◆ Falsely state that housing is not available for inspection, sale, or rental
- ◆ Set different terms, conditions, or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- ◆ Provide different housing services or facilities
- ◆ For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (Blockbusting)
- ◆ Deny anyone access to or membership in a facility or service related to the sale or rental of housing



AGE OR FAMILIAL STATUS

Unless a building or community qualifies as housing for older persons, it may not discriminate against families in which one or more children under the age of 18 years of age live with:

- ◆ A parent;
- ◆ A parent who has legal custody of the children);
- ◆ A person designated by the parent or legal custodian of the children)
- ◆ Familial status protection also applies to pregnant women and anyone securing legal custody of a child under 18 years of age.



PROTECTION FOR THE DISABLED

If tenant or member of their household:

- ◆ Has a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- ◆ Has a record of such disability; or
- ◆ Is regarded as having such a disability,

A Landlord May Not...

Refuse to let the tenant make reasonable modifications to the dwelling or common use areas, at the tenant’s expense, if necessary for the handicapped person to use the housing.

Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services, if necessary, for the handicapped person to use the housing.

Example: A building with a “no pets” policy must allow a visually impaired tenant to keep a guide dog.

Example: A rental complex that offers ample, unassigned parking must honor a request from a mobility impaired tenant for a reserved parking space near the tenant’s apartment.

HAGERSTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization promoting fair housing equal opportunity for all residents of the City of Hagerstown and Washington County, MD.

FAIR HOUSING

DO’S AND DON’TS

DON’T . . .

- ◆ Ask illegal questions about an applicant’s marital status, religious practices, or sexual orientation
- ◆ Advertise indicating a preference for a specific age, religion, race, etc.
- ◆ Set different fees, charges or security deposit amounts for different tenants in comparable units
- ◆ Steer applicants to other landlords or neighborhoods

DO . . .

- ◆ Treat each applicant equally. Be consistent in the information you request and the application approval process.
- ◆ Use a printed application form to ask for financial information, names, and ages of household members, previous rental references, or credit references
- ◆ Document contacts with applicants and tenants in writing
- ◆ Keep a written copy of your policies and procedures on applications and occupancy
- ◆ Educate and train people working for you about Fair Housing laws and practices
- ◆ Display the Equal Housing Opportunity logo in advertising and in your place of business.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL

301-797-0900