

Introduction to Open Communities

OUR MISSION



The mission of Open Communities is to ensure that housing in north suburban Chicago is fair and inclusive.

We do this by educating, advocating, and organizing to eradicate housing discrimination, in all of its forms and against all persons, due to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, disability, familial status, source of income, or prior justice-involvement.

OPEN COMMUNITIES' SERVICES



- Fair Housing Investigation & Enforcement
- Fair Housing Community Education
- Assistance with RA and RM
- *
- Foreclosure Prevention
- Pre & Post Purchase Counseling
- Rental Counseling
- Financial Coaching
- Landlord/Tenant Mediation
- Consultations

WHAT IS *FAIR HOUSING*?

Fair Housing is the right for all people to:

- Live where they choose
- Have access to housing (seek, rent, or buy) and
- Enjoy the full use of their homes without:
 - Unlawful discrimination, interference,
 - Coercion, threats, or intimidation by owners, landlords or real estate agents or any other persons. (source: IDHR)



The Fair Housing Act

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968

- *The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, seeking housing assistance, or engaging in other housing-related activities.*
- *The Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on seven federally protected classes...*

FEDERALLY PROTECTED CLASSES



DISABILITY



RACE



SEX



COLOR



**NATIONAL
ORIGIN**



RELIGION



**FAMILY
STATUS**



FAIR HOUSING PROTECTED CLASSES

<u>Protected Classes</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Illinois</u>	<u>Chicago</u>	<u>Cook County</u>
Race	X	X	X	X
Color	X	X	X	X
National Origin	X	X	X	X
Religion	X	X	X	X
Sex	X	X	X	X
Familial Status	X	X	X	X
Disability	X	X	X	X
Ancestry		X	X	X
Sexual Orientation		X	X	X
Gender Identity		X	X	X
Age (40 and Over)		X	X	X
Parental Status		X	X	X
Military Status		X	X	X
Order of Protection		X		
Marital Status		X	X	X
Pregnancy		X	X	
Military Discharge Status		X		X
Source of Income		X	X	X
Housing Status				X
Covered Criminal History				X

PROTECTED CLASS - DISABILITY

Fair Housing Violations

- **Discrimination in the terms or conditions of housing.**
 - **Making people with disabilities provide more robust evidence of income stability than other renters.**
 - **Ex: Paternalistic rules or regulations for people with disabilities.**
- **Refusal to rent or sell due to disability.**
 - **Ex: delay can mean denial.**
- **Illegal inquiries into the nature or severity of the disability.**
- **Steering**
 - **Requiring that people with disabilities only live in "accessible units in the building."**

PROTECTED CLASS - DISABILITY

Reasonable Accommodation

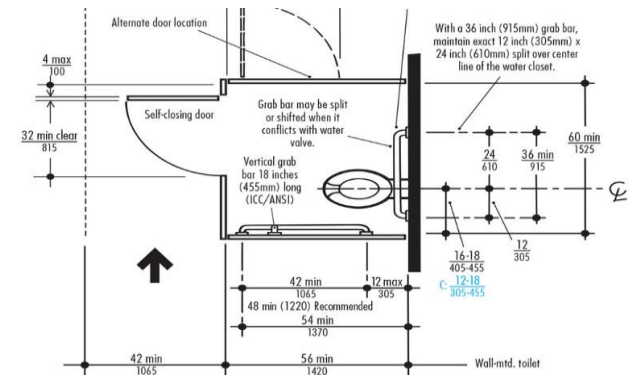
- An exception to a policy, practice, service or procedure of a housing provider that may be necessary to afford a disabled person the full use and enjoyment of the property.
- *Examples:* Service animals; parking spaces; mail rent instead of personal delivery



www.fresh-air-mobility.org

Reasonable Modification

- A request to physically change the property in order to allow a disabled person the full use and enjoyment of the property.
- *Examples:* Widening a door, installing grab bars in a shower



What is Fair Housing Testing?



Testing is a bit like being a 'secret shopper' or going undercover. Testers pose as potential renters or homebuyers in various real estate situations to determine whether unlawful discriminatory housing practices are taking place. The results of these tests help us understand when housing providers need more education or when to file formal complaints or take legal action.

- Open Communities

ENFORCEMENT

What to do with evidence of discrimination?

- Call Open Communities: 847-501-5760
- HUD FHEO: **1-800-669-9777**
 - https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint
- Illinois Department of Human Rights: **312-814-6229(Chicago Intake)**
 - <https://www2.illinois.gov/dhr/FilingCharge/Pages/Housing.aspx>
- Cook County Commission on Human Rights: **312-603-1100**
 - <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/complaint-filing-and-investigation>
- Federal & State Court

THANK YOU

Any questions?

You can find us at:

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