Housing Discrimination Based on Sex, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity

Fact Sheet

A Fairfax County, Va., publication

Overview

Virginia's fair housing law protects against discrimination based on: Elderliness (55+), Military Status, Source of Funds, **Sexual Orientation**, and **Gender Identity**.

In addition, Fairfax County protects against discrimination based on Marital Status.

Definitions

Sex Discrimination: The denial of an opportunity to rent or purchase a home because of a person's sex.

- Examples:
  - Increasing rent or threatening an eviction because of sex or gender.
  - Applying different rules because of sex or gender.
  - Advertising a preference.
  - Sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment: Any unwanted sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

- Quid Pro Quo: An unwelcome request in exchange for housing or services.
- Hostile Environment: Unwelcome conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to interfere with housing.
- Retaliation: Acting against any person because that person reported a discriminatory practice to a housing provider or other authority.

Sexual Orientation: Discriminating against a person for their actual or perceived sexual orientation. This includes discrimination due to someone's physical appearance, mannerisms, the partner they are with, or any self-identifying symbols or flags.

- Example:
  - Refusing to rent to a same-gender couple.

Gender Identity: Discriminating against someone for their gender-related identity, appearance, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.

- Examples:
  - Harassing a tenant by not using their correct pronouns or chosen name on purpose.
  - Charging different fees or enforcing different conditions after a tenant transitions.

Contact Us

Housing discrimination is illegal. To report possible housing discrimination, you can contact the Fairfax County Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs (FCOHREP) or Equal Rights Center (ERC).

FCOHREP:

703-324-2953 | TTY 711
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/humanrights/

ERC:

202-234-3062
www.equalrightscenter.org

To request this information in an alternate format, call the Fairfax County Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs, 703-324-2953 | TTY 711.

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