

Race
Color
Religion
National Origin
Sex
Familial Status
Disability
Elderliness

**YOU ARE
PROTECTED**

HOME's Mission:

*Ensuring equal access to
housing for all people*

If you feel you may be a victim of housing
discrimination, please email:
fairhousing@HOMEofVA.org
or call our office at **804.354.0641**

*Information from HOME is
not intended to be legal advice.
Please consult an attorney for legal advice.*

*Alternative formats will be
available when requested.*



HOME
Housing Opportunities Made Equal

Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME)

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FAIR HOUSING =
**WHAT DOES IT
MEAN TO YOU?**



**HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES
MADE EQUAL OF VIRGINIA, INC.**

FAIR HOUSING IS A RIGHT

What is Fair Housing?

The Virginia and federal fair housing laws provide protection in housing to groups of persons based on certain characteristics. A group sharing a protected characteristic is described as a “protected class.”



Together, the Virginia and federal fair housing laws prohibit discrimination in housing-related transactions (rental, sales, lending, insurance, zoning) based on the protected classes of:

Race (any race)

Color (any color)

Religion (any religion or no religion)

National Origin (any nationality)

Sex

Familial Status (presence of children under 18 in the family or pregnant women or adults attempting to secure custody of children)

Disability (handicap)

Elderliness (55 years or older, covered under Virginia state law only)

Each of us is a member of several protected classes. Fair housing laws apply to us all!

Please note that some exemptions from fair housing laws exist for smaller housing providers and for housing for older persons among others. Contact HOME for more details.

HOME IS HERE TO HELP

Housing Discrimination May Include:

- Refusing to rent to a person using a wheelchair for fear a unit may be damaged, or refusing to allow the installation of a ramp.
- Telling a tenant: “Since you use a walker, you need additional insurance coverage.”
- Enforcing rules or performing repairs for some tenants or residents but not others.
- Publishing a print ad that says “no children,” posting ads online saying “no minorities” or placing a sign on property saying “Hispanics need not apply.”
- Limiting the number of children in a complex or confining them to a specific building or floor.
- Steering minority homeowners to sections of town where other minorities live or telling white homeowners they may not be welcome in some neighborhoods.
- Charging additional rent or deposits because someone with a disability needs a service, therapy or companion animal.
- Charging different fees or rates on a loan just because someone is Native American.
- Building a brand new, multi-family building which is not accessible to people with disabilities.
- Requiring that Muslims pay for criminal background checks but waiving the requirement for persons of other religions, races or nationalities.



- Propositioning a tenant for sex for rent or repairs, or making inappropriate comments.

THE LAW IS ON YOUR SIDE

There are legitimate reasons for someone *not* to rent or sell a dwelling.

These may include: insufficient income, poor credit history, criminal history or no stable source of income. Housing providers can put such policies in place as long as they are applied to **all** applicants.

What can HOME do?

HOME will help you determine whether what has happened is unlawful discrimination, and may help you seek the remedies that are available to everyone under fair housing laws. In certain situations, HOME will file (or assist in filing) complaints to ensure that uncovered discriminatory housing practices cease.

HOME will also provide technical assistance to educate housing providers on fair housing laws so they do not unknowingly discriminate.



Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. (HOME) is a private, nonprofit fair housing organization founded in 1971. HOME serves the commonwealth of Virginia with a mission of ensuring equal access to housing for all people.