

# You are Protected



**Race**  
**Color**  
**Religion**  
**National Origin**  
**Sex/Gender**  
**Familial Status**  
**Disability**  
**Age 55+**  
**Source of Funds**  
**Military Status**  
**Sexual Orientation**  
**Gender Identity**

If you feel you may be a victim of housing discrimination, please contact us:

**[www.HOMEofVA.org/Report](http://www.HOMEofVA.org/Report)**

**[fairhousing@HOMEofVA.org](mailto:fairhousing@HOMEofVA.org)**

**804.354.0641**

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

*Alternative formats available upon request.*

## HOME'S MISSION:

*Ensure Equal Access to Housing  
for All People*



**Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia (HOME)** is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and a HUD-approved housing counseling agency.

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**[www.HOMEofVA.org](http://www.HOMEofVA.org)**

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## FAIR HOUSING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



**Housing Opportunities  
Made Equal of Virginia**

**Everyone has the right to  
fully enjoy their homes, free  
from discrimination.**

# Know Your Rights

## 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**
- **Color**
- **Religion**
- **National Origin**
- **Sex**
- **Disability**
- **Familial Status**
- **Age 55+**
- **Source of Fund**
- **Military Status**
- **Sexual Orientation**
- **Gender Identity**

## What is fair housing?

Federal law defines a person with a disability as “Any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.”

A physical or mental impairment can include hearing, mobility and visual impairments, chronic alcoholism, mental illness, HIV/AIDS, AIDS related Complex, or intellectual or developmental disabilities that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as walking, talking, hearing, seeing, breathing, learning, performing manual tasks, and caring for oneself.

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## Housing discrimination may include:

- **Refusing to rent or sell to a person with a disability.** For example, refusing to rent to a person using a wheelchair for fear a unit may be damaged. This could also include refusing to rent to someone because of a mental illness, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- **Setting different lease conditions, rates, or security deposits for a person with a disability.** For example, telling a tenant “since you use a walker, you need additional insurance coverage.”
- **Refusing to allow, or charging a deposit for, a service animal.** Because service animals are not pets, they are not subject to pet restrictions or fees.
- **Refusing to allow a necessary reasonable accommodation or modification to a property.** For example, refusing to let a tenant using a wheelchair build a ramp to access the property.

## Reasonable Accommodations & Reasonable Modifications

A person with a disability is legally entitled to certain housing accommodations and modifications.

**A reasonable accommodation** is an exception or change that a housing provider makes to rules, policies, services, or regulations (such as a “no pet” rule) that will assist a resident or applicant with a disability to take full advantage of a housing program and/or dwelling.

**A reasonable modification** is an alteration to the physical premises allowing a person with a disability to overcome obstacles that interfere with his/her use of the dwelling and/or common areas. These are typically structural changes to the housing unit (such as a ramp) which are necessary to accommodate a person with a disability.

# HOME is Here to Help

## 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.

In some cases HOME can also assist with or provide resources for how to request reasonable accommodations or reasonable modifications.

If you have faced housing discrimination, please let us know! Visit:

**[HOMEofVA.org/Report](https://homeofva.org/report)**

Or call **804-354-0641** | VA Relay 711

For more information, visit:

**[HOMEofVA.org/Disability](https://homeofva.org/disability)**

