

FAIR HOUSING

Know Your Rights in Virginia

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia



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



Disability



Color



Age 55+*



Religion



Source of Funds*



National Origin



Military Status*



Sex



Sexual Orientation*



Familial Status



Gender Identity*

*Protected in Virginia

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

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.
- Advertising an apartment as “no section 8.”
- Refusing to rent a single unit to same-gender spouses in a senior housing complex, but allowing heterosexual spouses to live together.
- 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 requires a service or emotional support 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 sexual comments.
- Rejecting a rental application because a tenant’s perceived gender does not match their identification documents.

You have a right to fair housing, HOME of VA can help!

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia can help determine if you have been discriminated against, and may help you seek the remedies that are available to everyone under fair housing laws. HOME will also provide technical assistance to educate housing providers on fair housing laws so they do not unknowingly discriminate.

As a non-profit provider, our services are provided statewide and are **free and confidential**.

Report Housing Discrimination at HOMEofVA.org/Report

FairHousing@HOMEofVA.org • 804-354-0641 • VA Relay 711

Information from HOME is not intended to be legal advice. Alternative formats available upon request.

HOMEofVA.org/FairHousing

