

# BECOME A TESTER

Promote Fair Housing in Your Community

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia



## What is a Tester?

Testers are a powerful tool used to uncover illegal housing discrimination and hold housing industry professionals accountable. Testing is a simulated housing transaction designed to gain evidence of potential differential treatment between people of different protected classes.

To perform a test, the testers take on various roles and profiles. They gather information, much like anyone on a housing search or when seeking a loan, and observe how a housing provider treats prospective tenants, mortgage applicants or home buyers. After each test, the tester completes a detailed account of what occurred during the test and submits to HOME.

Testers are a diverse group of dependable and socially conscientious people passionate about helping their community. People of all racial and ethnic groups, all genders, of varying ages (over 18 years old), with and without disabilities can be valuable testers.

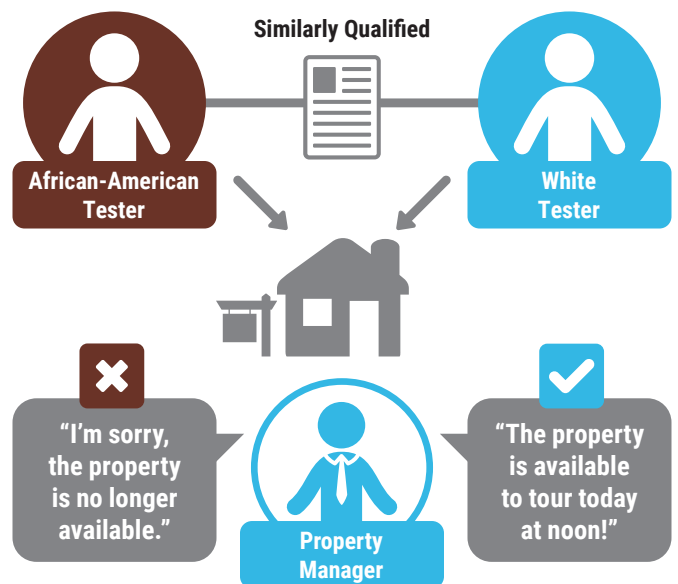
**We rely on our testers and their work to find and stop housing discrimination. Without tests and our testers, most housing discrimination goes undetected.**

## Testing & the Civil Rights Movement

Testing was used during **the Chicago Freedom Movement** (1965–1967), led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., James Bevel, and Al Raby. This inspired the creation of HOME's first testing program and sparked the first big push for fair housing nationwide.

## A Test Might Look Like:

Two testers contact the same available rental property with an interest in applying. Their profiles are very similar and both are equally qualified. The only difference is their race. The testers record their experiences with the housing provider and are later compared to determine if they were treated differently.



**A tester is not trying to trick or trap a housing provider into discriminating.** They are similar to restaurant critics in that they observe and record their experiences. Testers are sometimes referred to as "secret shoppers" or "auditors."

## Help HOME uncover housing discrimination!

**Testers are part-time, as-needed employees who receive a stipend for their time starting at \$125 minimum per test depending upon the type of test conducted. Related expenses are also reimbursed with prior approval.**

Following approval of their application, testers are required to participate in a training prior to conducting any tests. Tests are arranged around the tester's schedule on an as needed basis. Testers do not need to have a private vehicle as long as they are able to get to and from needed test sites. Many tests may even be done over the phone or online without a need for transportation. *Due to the potential to be witness to a fair housing violation, testers are screened for criminal history and any conflicts of interest.*

**Submit an application online: [HOMEofVA.org/BecomeATester](https://HOMEofVA.org/BecomeATester)**

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

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