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## A Community Service

In order to provide an educational service to the community and to further its mission of combatting housing discrimination, The Fair Housing Council of Orange County is providing this overview of the law regarding housing discrimination. We urge you to take a few minutes to review the information, in order that you may become better informed on this important subject.

Although discrimination in housing has been illegal for many years, it is still all too common in our communities. By becoming better informed about both the law and how to respond if you encounter housing discrimination, you can both enforce your rights and make your community a better place to live.

**DON'T GET LOCKED OUT,  
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!**

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The Fair Housing Council  
of Orange County  
A non-profit community organization  
presents

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## A BASIC PRIMER

# FAIR HOUSING: Your Rights Under The Law



EQUAL HOUSING  
OPPORTUNITY

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# HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW

For over 35 years federal and California laws have provided protections against housing discrimination based on certain personal characteristics. The characteristics currently covered are listed below.

## Protections Under Federal & State Law

The Fair Housing Act makes it illegal to discriminate because of:

- ◆ RACE
- ◆ COLOR
- ◆ NATIONAL ORIGIN
- ◆ SEX
- ◆ RELIGION
- ◆ HANDICAP
- ◆ FAMILIAL STATUS (Presence of Children)

## Additional Protections Under California Law

In addition to the above characteristics, the Fair Employment and Housing Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act make it illegal to discriminate because of:

- ◆ MARITAL STATUS
- ◆ ANCESTRY
- ◆ SEXUAL ORIENTATION
- ◆ AGE
- ◆ SOURCE OF INCOME
- ◆ ARBITRARY PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

## What Constitutes Housing Discrimination Under The Law ?

Discrimination generally includes, but is not limited to, the following types of actions based on one of the previously listed characteristics:

- ◆ REFUSAL TO RENT OR SELL
- ◆ REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE
- ◆ OFFERING DIFFERENT TERMS & CONDITIONS
- ◆ DIFFERENT TREATMENT IN SERVICES, FACILITIES OR AMENITIES
- ◆ FALSELY DENYING THAT HOUSING IS AVAILABLE FOR RENT OR SALE
- ◆ MAKING HOUSING UNAVAILABLE
- ◆ ADVERTISING OR STATING A PREFERENCE
- ◆ INTIMIDATING, THREATENING, COERCING OR INTERFERING WITH SOMEONE WHO IS EXERCISING THEIR FAIR HOUSING RIGHTS

In addition to direct housing transactions, the law covers real estate agents and brokers, mortgage lending and housing related insurance activities.

Also, if you or someone associated with you have a disability, a record of a disability, or are regarded as having a disability, there are additional provisions under the law regarding accommodation of that disability by a landlord and the modification of a dwelling to provide its full use and enjoyment to you. There are also provisions regarding the accessibility of certain newer housing units.

As with most areas of the law, there is complexity in the area of housing discrimination. Even if your experience does not readily fit within the above described categories, you still might be a victim of illegal housing discrimination.

If you believe you have been treated differently, in any way, in the course of a housing related activity or transaction, you should contact The Fair Housing Council of Orange County. We can assess your situation, inform you of the options available, and help you to take appropriate action, if you so choose.

## What Can You Do If You Believe You Have Been Discriminated Against ?

Your first step should be to contact The Fair Housing Council of Orange County (FHCO) at (714) 569-0823 or (800) 698-FAIR. It is FHCO's mission to combat housing discrimination.

You can also file a complaint with the California Dept. of Fair Employment and Housing at (800) 233-3212 or with The U. S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development at (800) 347-3739, within one year of the alleged discrimination.

You can also file a federal or state lawsuit, within two years of the alleged discrimination. For this, you may wish to contact a private attorney.

It may also be possible to redress your problem through mediation with the party responsible for the alleged discrimination.