**Fair Housing Act**

The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, and national origin. Its coverage includes private housing, housing that receives Federal financial assistance, and State and local government housing. It is unlawful to discriminate in any aspect of selling or renting housing or to deny a dwelling to a buyer or renter because of the disability of that individual, an individual associated with the buyer or renter, or an individual who intends to live in the residence. Other covered activities include, for example, financing, zoning practices, new construction design, and advertising.

The Fair Housing Act requires owners of housing facilities to make reasonable exceptions in their policies and operations to afford people with disabilities equal housing opportunities. For example, a landlord with a "no pets" policy may be required to grant an exception to this rule and allow an individual who is blind to keep a guide dog in the residence. The Fair Housing Act also requires landlords to allow tenants with disabilities to make reasonable access-related modifications to their private living space, as well as to common use spaces. (The landlord is not required to pay for the changes.) The Act further requires that new multifamily housing with four or more units be designed and built to allow access for persons with disabilities. This includes accessible common use areas, doors that are wide enough for wheelchairs, kitchens and bathrooms that allow a person using a wheelchair to maneuver, and other adaptable features within the units.

Complaints of Fair Housing Act violations may be filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. For more information or to file a complaint, contact:

Office of Compliance and Disability Rights Division  
Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street, S.W. , Room 5242  
Washington, D.C. 20410

[www.hud.gov/offices/fheo](http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo)

(800) 669-9777 (voice)  
(800) 927-9275 (TTY)

For questions about the accessibility provisions of the Fair Housing Act, contact Fair Housing FIRST at:

[www.fairhousingfirst.org](http://www.usdoj.gov/cgi-bin/outside.cgi?http://www.fairhousingfirst.org)

(888) 341-7781 (voice/TTY)

For publications, you may call the Housing and Urban Development Customer Service Center at:

(800) 767-7468 (voice/relay)

Additionally, the Department of Justice can file cases involving a pattern or practice of discrimination. The Fair Housing Act may also be enforced through private lawsuits.