

# FILING A COMPLAINT OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

## HOW TO FILE:

If you believe that you have been discriminated against in a housing matter, you may file a complaint with the City of Iowa City Human Rights Commission.

## WHEN TO FILE:

A complaint must be filed within 300 days of the alleged act of discrimination.

## WHERE TO FILE:

A complaint may be filed at the following office:

Iowa City Human Rights Commission  
City Hall  
410 E. Washington Street  
Iowa City, IA 52240  
(319) 356-5022; (319) 356-5015  
(319) 356-5014

FAX: (319) 887-6213

humanrights@iowa-city.org  
www.icgov.org/humanrights



# IOWA CITY'S FAIR HOUSING LAW



Human Rights Commission  
410 E. Washington St.  
Iowa City, IA 52240  
www.icgov.org/humanrights  
humanrights@iowa-city.org

April 2016

# HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Iowa City's Municipal Code, Title 2, Human Rights Ordinance, prohibits discrimination in housing based on **AGE, COLOR, CREED, DISABILITY, GENDER IDENTITY, MARITAL STATUS, FAMILIAL STATUS, NATIONAL ORIGIN, RACE, RELIGION, SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF DEPENDENTS OR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SOURCE OF INCOME OF THAT PERSON** (this includes Housing Choice Voucher Subsidies and similar rent subsidy programs<sup>1</sup>). Discrimination based on **ANY OF THESE FACTORS** is prohibited in the following housing practices.

## 1. TO REFUSE TO SHOW, RENT, LEASE, SELL, OR EXCHANGE REAL PROPERTY OR DWELLINGS OF ANY KIND

Dwellings include any building, structure, or portion thereof which are occupied as, or designed or intended for occupancy as, a residence by one of more persons or families, and any vacant land which is offered for sale or lease for the construction or location thereon of any such building, structure, or portion thereof. Apartments, condominiums, duplexes and similar attached housing, mobile homes and trailer courts, and private homes are included in the definition.

Because of your protected class:  
*Have you been denied an opportunity to see an apartment or home or refused an opportunity to rent or buy when the property was available to others?*

*Were you told that the housing unit was no longer available, but you still saw the "for rent" or "for sale" sign up the next day?*

*Did you receive different information over the phone than you received in person?*

*Was there a waiting list? (This is not discriminatory in itself, but it may be if it is not followed.)*

## 2. TO CAUSE UNEQUAL TERMS, CONDITIONS OR PRIVILEGES IN HOUSING

Because of your protected class:  
*Have you been denied the same privileges as others, including the provision of needed repairs and services, or use of the apartments' pool or club house, either as a tenant yourself or with a guest?*

*If given an eviction notice, were you treated differently than other tenants?*

*Were you quoted a sale or rental price higher than the advertised price? Was a higher security deposit required?*

## 3. TO CAUSE UNEQUAL TERMS, CONDITIONS AND PRIVILEGES OF ANY REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION, INCLUDING THE USE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE PURCHASE, CONSTRUCTION, OR MAINTENANCE OF HOUSING

Because of your protected class:  
*Was a credit check or co-signer required for you, but not for others? Did a lender or agent refuse to include your spouse's income in qualification for a loan or lease? Or did they demand that this income be included against your wishes?*

*Was a larger down payment or a higher interest rate required of you compared to other buyers?*

*Have you been denied a housing loan or apartment lease?*

*Were you asked your intentions about starting a family?*

## 4. TO SEGREGATE AND/OR SEPARATE IN HOUSING

Because of your protected class:  
*Were you actively discouraged from seeking housing in certain neighborhoods?*

*Did the rental or sales agent show you only one subdivision or area even though you wanted to see others?*

## 5. TO INCLUDE OR HONOR RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS THAT ARE DISCRIMINATORY

## 6. TO ADVERTISE ANY DISCRIMINATORY PREFERENCE OR LIMITATION IN HOUSING; TO DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ADVERTISE OR PUBLICIZE THAT A PERSON IS NOT WELCOME OR SOLICITED

To make an inquiry or reference that is discriminatory. Example: "No Section 8 Allowed!"

Because of your protected class:  
*Did the owner, manager, lender, or real estate agent inquire about or refer to any protected class listed above, in reference to you?*

## 7. TO AID AND ABET UNFAIR HOUSING PRACTICES

To prevent any person from complying with fair housing practices, or to assist someone in furthering unfair housing practices.

## 8. TO RETALIATE AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OR AGENT WHO COMPLIES WITH FAIR HOUSING PRACTICES THROUGH SUCH ACTIONS AS DEMOTION, DISCHARGE, OR UNEQUAL COMPENSATION

## 9. TO REFUSE TO RECEIVE AND/OR TRANSMIT ANY BONA FIDE OFFER TO BUY, RENT, SELL OR LEASE HOUSING

## 10. TO PRACTICE BLOCKBUSTING, REDLINING, OR STEERING

**BLOCKBUSTING-** may occur when real estate agents promote the listing and sale of real estate (and create business for themselves) through panic tactics such as warning residents to sell because different racial or ethnic groups, for example, are moving into the area. Phrases such as 'undesirable elements are moving in, or references to 'declining schools' or 'changing neighborhoods' may be examples of this practice.

**REDLINING-** is when lenders and insurers either refuse their services to certain neighborhoods or require additional costs, fees, and/or higher rates for their services based on protected class(es).

**STEERING-** is conduct that may influence a person's choice of a housing location on the basis of his or her protected class. Examples include channeling persons into their own ethnic-identity neighborhoods, and selecting listings or failing to advise of listings on a discriminatory basis.

<sup>1</sup> Becomes effective June 1, 2016