

# Illinois Fair Housing Act: Know Your Rights

## Illinois Fair Housing Information

At **McCarthy Property Management** we believe everyone deserves equal access to housing opportunities. We are committed to complying with all federal, state, and local fair housing laws and providing professional, ethical service to every client.

This page provides an overview of the Illinois Fair Housing Act and the federal Fair Housing Act. It is intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

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## What Is Fair Housing?

Fair housing laws protect individuals from discrimination when renting, buying, financing, or seeking housing. These laws help ensure that everyone has equal access to housing regardless of personal characteristics protected by law.

The federal Fair Housing Act applies throughout the United States, while Illinois law provides additional protections for residents.

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## Protected Classes Under Federal Law

Under the federal Fair Housing Act, housing discrimination based on any of the following is prohibited:

- Race
  - Color
  - National Origin
  - Religion
  - Sex
  - Disability
  - Familial Status (including families with children under 18 and pregnant individuals)
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## Additional Protected Classes in Illinois

Illinois law expands fair housing protections beyond federal law. Housing discrimination is prohibited based on:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National Origin
- Ancestry
- Sex
- Disability (Physical or Mental)
- Familial Status
- Age (40 and older in certain employment contexts; housing protections vary by circumstance)
- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Order of Protection Status
- Military Status
- Pregnancy
- Arrest Record (as provided by Illinois law)
- Unfavorable Military Discharge
- Citizenship Status (where protected by law)
- Source of Income (including lawful sources such as housing vouchers where applicable)

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## What Housing Providers Cannot Do

Housing providers, landlords, property managers, lenders, and real estate professionals may not:

- Refuse to rent or sell housing because of a protected characteristic.
- Advertise housing that indicates a preference or limitation.
- Charge different prices, deposits, or rental terms.
- Offer different services or amenities.
- Falsely claim that housing is unavailable.
- Harass, intimidate, or retaliate against someone exercising their fair housing rights.
- Refuse reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities when required by law.
- Steer buyers or renters toward or away from certain neighborhoods because of protected characteristics.

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# Examples of Housing Discrimination

Discrimination may include:

- Refusing to show available homes to families with children.
- Charging higher security deposits because of disability.
- Rejecting an applicant because they receive lawful housing assistance.
- Advertising "adults only" or "no children."
- Refusing to allow a service animal in a property with a no-pets policy.
- Directing buyers to certain neighborhoods based on race or ethnicity.
- Treating applicants differently because of religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

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## Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications

Individuals with disabilities may have the right to request reasonable accommodations or modifications.

Examples include:

- Allowing a service animal or assistance animal despite a no-pets policy.
- Providing accessible parking.
- Permitting installation of accessibility features such as grab bars or ramps when appropriate.
- Modifying policies to allow equal access to housing.

Housing providers must evaluate these requests in accordance with applicable law.



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## Fair Housing in Rental Housing

Landlords and property managers must apply rental standards consistently.

Applicants should be evaluated using the same objective criteria, including:

- Income qualifications
- Credit requirements
- Rental history
- Background screening (where legally permitted)

Standards should be applied equally to all applicants.

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## Filing a Fair Housing Complaint

If you believe you have experienced housing discrimination, you may file a complaint with the appropriate government agency.

Possible options include:

- The Illinois Department of Human Rights
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Many complaints have filing deadlines, so it is important to act promptly.

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## Our Commitment

Our company proudly supports Equal Housing Opportunity.

We are committed to:

- Treating every client with dignity and respect
- Following all federal, state, and local fair housing laws
- Providing equal professional service to all buyers, sellers, landlords, tenants, and investors
- Continuing fair housing education and training
- Promoting inclusive communities

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can a landlord refuse to rent to families with children?**

Generally, no. Familial status is protected under federal law, although limited exemptions may apply for qualifying housing for older persons.

### **Can a landlord refuse a service animal?**

In many situations, no. Housing providers may be required to make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

### **Is it legal to advertise "No Kids"?**

Generally, no. Advertising that discourages or excludes protected classes may violate fair housing laws.

### **Can a realtor recommend certain neighborhoods?**

Real estate professionals should provide objective information and allow clients to make their own housing decisions. Steering based on protected characteristics is prohibited.

### **Does Illinois provide additional protection beyond federal law?**

Yes. Illinois law includes additional protected classes beyond those found in the federal Fair Housing Act.

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## Equal Housing Opportunity

Our goal is to provide every client with honest, professional, and equal service. We welcome all buyers, sellers, renters, landlords, and investors and are committed to maintaining a discrimination-free experience.

If you have questions about fair housing rights or would like assistance buying, selling, or renting property, please contact our office.

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## **Disclaimer**

This page is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Fair housing laws may change over time, and specific situations may require legal guidance. For the complete text of applicable laws and regulations, please consult official federal and Illinois government resources.

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