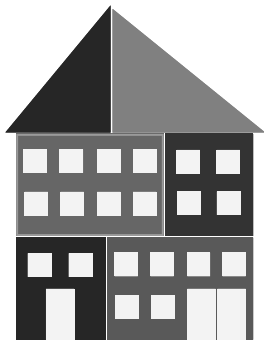


## USEFUL TIPS

What you should do if you believe you have experienced housing discrimination:

- Contact the Fair Housing Project and report the discrimination to us.
- Keep a journal of incidents of discrimination.
- Write down what you experienced, including names, dates, addresses, rental terms, and any other details about your interaction.
- Keep any documents related to the discrimination, including all emails and text communications.
- Following the incident, you have one year to file an administrative complaint or two years to file a lawsuit in court.



## THE FAIR HOUSING PROJECT

**T**he Fair Housing Project of Legal Aid of North Carolina is available to provide information concerning a person's rights under the federal Fair Housing Act. If you believe you are a victim of housing discrimination, contact us for assistance at **1-855-797-3247**. A project staff person will discuss the situation with you and help you to decide what to do next. Your response to us will be kept confidential.

When necessary, our staff can assist you in filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), local human relations commissions, or in court.

### Fair Housing Project

**LEGAL AID OF NORTH CAROLINA**

P.O. Box 26087

Raleigh, NC 27611

**(855) 797-FAIR**

**(855) 797-3247**

[www.fairhousingnc.org](http://www.fairhousingnc.org)

*"The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government."*

## HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

# FAIR HOUSING & NATIONAL ORIGIN DISCRIMINATION



**LEGAL AID  
OF NORTH CAROLINA**

### Fair Housing Project

P.O. Box 26087

Raleigh, NC 27611



## HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

The federal Fair Housing Act (“FHA”) prohibits discrimination in housing based on a person’s **race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, and disability**.

### NATIONAL ORIGIN DISCRIMINATION

Under the FHA, it is unlawful for a landlord, property manager, real estate agent, or property owner to treat someone differently because of their national origin. National origin includes birthplace, ethnicity, ancestry, culture, and language.

### BIRTHPLACE, ETHNICITY, AND ANCESTRY

National origin includes a region within a country or a region that spans multiple countries. The FHA may be violated even if a landlord does not know a person’s particular national origin or is mistaken about a person’s national origin.

### LANGUAGE & ACCENT

If a landlord treats someone differently because he or she speaks with an accent or speaks a language other than English, it may constitute national origin discrimination. Similarly, selectively enforcing language-related housing policies (such as only prohibiting some languages or only telling certain applicants about those policies) may also violate the FHA.



## COMMON VIOLATIONS OF THE FHA

There are many forms of national origin discrimination. These are just a few examples of conduct that may violate the FHA:

- Refusing to rent, sell, or negotiate with a person because of that person's birthplace, ethnicity, or ancestry.
- Charging additional rent, deposit, or fees because a person speaks a language other than English.
- Discouraging or recommending certain communities because a home seeker has a name that may be associated with a national origin.
- Refusing unit maintenance because a person is an immigrant or refugee, while providing it to everyone else.

### DISCRIMINATORY POLICIES

Discriminatory policies or property rules may also violate the FHA. Some examples include:

- Requiring all household occupants to speak English.
- Telling a person not to cook certain foods because of the possible smell.
- Forcing a person to choose an apartment near other people who speak the same language.

Enforcing certain rules against someone, but not enforcing those rules against anyone else, may also violate the FHA.

## IMMIGRATION STATUS

Every person is protected under the FHA, regardless of the person’s immigration status.

HUD does not inquire about immigration status when investigating fair housing complaints.

Landlords may ask for documents and perform credit checks to determine whether an individual meets objective rental criteria. However, a landlord must apply the *same* policies and procedures in a consistent manner to *all* potential tenants. It is unlawful for a landlord to ask a tenant questions about immigration status because of how the tenant looks, talks, or dresses.

Requests for citizenship and immigration information may violate the FHA. For more information, contact the Fair Housing Project.

### HARASSMENT

It is illegal to coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere with a person exercising or enjoying their fair housing rights. Some examples of discriminatory conduct includes:

- Threatening to report a person to the police or ICE for filing a fair housing complaint.
- Threatening to evict a person unless he or she removes traditional cultural or religious clothing.
- Making racial, ethnic, or religious slurs towards a person.