

Date:

To:

Re: Appeal Denial of My Housing Application

Dear _____,

I, _____, received your letter stating that my application to rent was denied due to the results of a criminal background screening. I am writing to appeal the denial of my application for housing at _____.

I request that you conduct an individualized review and approve my application.

My criminal background consists of:

_____.

At the time of my conviction,

_____.

Since my conviction, I have

_____.

I have enclosed in support of my application for tenancy:

___ Character reference(s)	___ Court document(s) or related records
___ Former rental reference(s)	___ Evidence of rehabilitation effort(s)
___ Employer reference(s)	___ Other:

The **Fair Housing Act (FHA) prohibits housing discrimination** and housing practices with unjustified discriminatory effects based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, or disability. The FHA applies to private and subsidized housing. HUD issued guidance in 2016 on the “Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related Transactions”, and an implementation memo in 2022.

According to HUD, housing providers should consider not using criminal history to screen tenants for housing, explaining that criminal history is not a good predictor of housing success. Housing providers are also not generally required by law to exclude people with criminal histories as tenants. Housing providers can rely instead on other screening criteria that more closely relate to whether an applicant or resident would be a good tenant, such as ability to pay rent, prior rental history, or personal references.

HUD also says that landlords should conduct an individualized assessment of an application denied because of a criminal background report. HUD's guidance states that housing providers may violate the FHA if they deny housing to applicants convicted for criminal activity without considering other information, such as:

- The facts or circumstances surrounding the criminal conduct
- The age of the individual at the time of conviction
- How much time has passed since the criminal activity occurred
- Evidence of maintained good tenant history (prior to or following conviction)
- Evidence of rehabilitation efforts

Housing providers also cannot treat applicants with similar criminal histories differently due to their race, national origin, or other protected characteristic.

For these reasons, I request that you conduct an individualized review and approve my rental application.

Please respond in writing within ten (10) days of the date of this letter. If I do not hear back from you, I will assume that you have denied this request.

Finally, please send me a copy of your eligibility requirements; a copy of any documentation used as a basis for your denial; and a copy of my application. If a third party or credit reporting agency provided the criminal screening of my application, please provide a copy of the report you received.

Please also provide me with all information I am entitled to receive pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act so that I may obtain such screening information. This information may be sent to me at the mailing address and/or email address provided below my signature.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____