



*Is housing fair?*  
*Requirements of the Fair Housing Act*



Fair housing has been an important law since 1968 when the Fair Housing Act (FHA) was enacted as a part of the Civil Rights Act. The act prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, religion, sex and national origin. A 1988 amendment to the act added familial status and handicapped as protected statuses.

The Act prohibits discrimination for housing related loan activities bases upon the seven factors listed above. All financial institutions are covered by the prohibitions against discrimination in housing related loans and all financial institutions are also covered by the advertising requirements promulgated in the Act and the amendment.

Under the Act, financial institutions are prohibited from implementing or using discriminatory acts during any phase of housing lending transactions against any person due to that person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status or handicap. Any advertising used by financial institutions that are designed to solicit business for the purchase, construction, improvement, repair or maintenance of a dwelling or for loans secured by a dwelling are subject to the restrictions found in the FHA. Advertising may include statement stuffers, brochures, lobby "take-ones", posters or other forms of advertising. Even verbal advertisements must include a statement of nondiscrimination. Most of us have heard the words, "An equal housing lender" or "Equal opportunity lender," on TV or radio.

Advertising is key regulated activity under the Act because it is generally the way a financial institution introduces itself to potential borrowers, so discriminatory statements are prohibited. Also prohibited is the failure to include a particular demographic or image in advertising, such as showing only men at the bank applying for a loan or receiving the keys to a new home.

All financial institutions that engage in the business of making loans for a dwelling must also display the FHA logo on all written advertisements for real estate lending and display the Equal Housing Poster in each bank lobby and where deposits are accepted or loans are made. The key theme of the poster, “We do business in accordance with Federal Fair Lending Laws” is required as well as a listing of all seven protected classes.

If a potential borrower believes that housing isn’t fair, he or she may send a complaint to the Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC 20410 and to FDIC Consumer Response Center, 2345 Grand Boulevard, Suite 100, Kansas City, Missouri 64108.

U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



**EQUAL HOUSING  
OPPORTUNITY**

**We Do Business in Accordance With the Federal Fair  
Housing Law**

(The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988)

**It is illegal to Discriminate Against Any Person  
Because of Race, Color, Religion, Sex,  
Handicap, Familial Status, or National Origin**

- In the sale or rental of housing or residential lots
- In the provision of real estate brokerage services
- In advertising the sale or rental of housing
- In the appraisal of housing
- In the financing of housing
- Blockbusting is also illegal

Anyone who feels he or she has been discriminated against may file a complaint of housing discrimination:

1-800-669-9777 (Toll Free)  
1-800-927-9275 (TTY)  
[www.hud.gov/fairhousing](http://www.hud.gov/fairhousing)

**U.S. Department of Housing and  
Urban Development  
Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and  
Equal Opportunity  
Washington, D.C. 20410**