

All people are protected under federal, state, and local laws on the basis of various protected classes.

### THE FEDERAL FAIR HOUSING ACT

prohibits discrimination in housing based on these seven protected classes:

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Race</i>            | <i>Sex</i>             |
| <i>Color</i>           | <i>Disability</i>      |
| <i>National Origin</i> | <i>Familial Status</i> |
| <i>Religion</i>        |                        |

Familial status protects **all families with children** under the age of eighteen, which includes pregnant women and parents in the process of adopting or securing custody of a child. Children include foster children or grandchildren if the person has legal custody or written consent.

All families are protected, regardless of marital status or number of children.

### THE ILLINOIS HUMAN RIGHTS ACT provides additional protections:

- |                           |                                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Ancestry</i>           | <i>Age (for those over 40)</i>        |
| <i>Marital status</i>     | <i>Order of Protection Status</i>     |
| <i>Military Status</i>    | <i>Unfavorable Military discharge</i> |
| <i>Sexual Orientation</i> |                                       |
| <i>Gender Identity</i>    |                                       |

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Founded in 1968, HOPE serves Chicago's Northwestern & Western Suburbs, as well as twenty-eight other counties in Northern & North Central Illinois.

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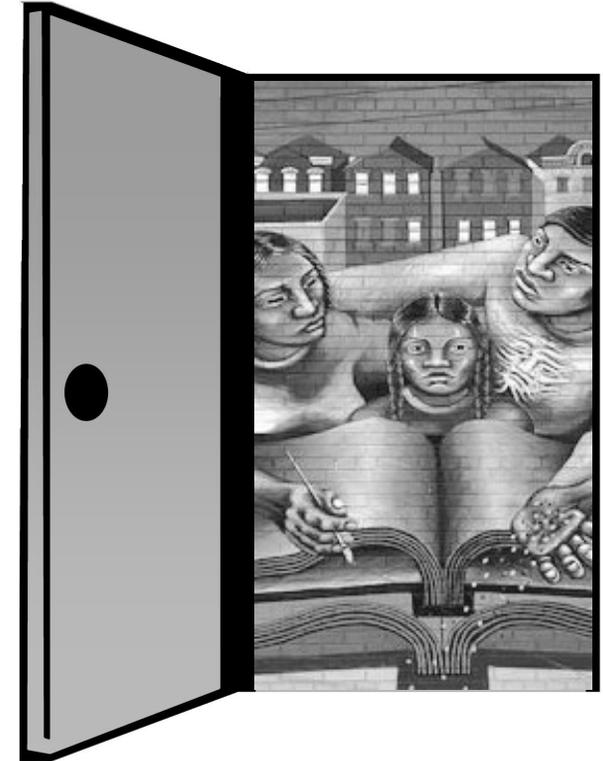
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# HOPE

## Fair Housing Center

*Opening America's Closed Doors*



## Fair Housing for Families

All parents want the best for their children. Federal, state, and local laws protect families with children and pregnant women so that every parent has the right to choose where to raise their child.

Housing discrimination can be blatant or subtle, so all parties should know their rights and responsibilities.

### Examples of discrimination include

- ◆ Advertisements suggest a preference for couples or singles or say, “No children.”
- ◆ A landlord asking for a higher deposit because you have children.
- ◆ A real estate agent tells you that a certain neighborhood is or isn’t better for kids.
- ◆ A landlord or property manager insists you can only rent units on a certain floor or in a particular part of the building.
- ◆ Building rules include things such as “No teens loitering after 10 pm”
- ◆ Limits on the number of people you can have in an apartment are unreasonable.
- ◆ A loan officer charging higher interest rates because you or your partner are pregnant.

Families can never be evicted because they have children.

## How HOPE Can Help

If you think you may be a victim of housing discrimination,

1. **Contact** HOPE Fair Housing Center.
2. **Document** meetings and phone calls with landlords, property managers, real estate agents, loan officers, and insurance agents.
3. **Save** all receipts, copies of applications, business cards, and other documents.

All of HOPE’s services are *free*.

*When appropriate HOPE can:*

- ◆ Investigate potential discrimination
- ◆ Advocate on your behalf with a housing provider
- ◆ Assist in filing a Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) complaint
- ◆ Help conciliate your case with the offending party
- ◆ Refer your case to attorneys that are experts in fair housing litigation

Legitimate reasons for someone not to rent or sell a dwelling include insufficient income, poor credit history, and criminal history. Whatever policies are in place must be applied to **all** applicants.

### Occupancy Standards

Housing providers have the right to say how many people can live in a unit. However, any limit that is less than two people per room is considered unreasonable. Size of rooms and total living space should be considered.

### Rules

Building rules should apply to all tenants and focus on behavior not status (i.e. teen, child).



### Advertisements

Advertisements for housing may never express preference based on one of the protected classes.

### Exempt housing

Specific housing designed for older persons is exempt from the familial status protection of the Fair Housing Act. Additionally, owner-occupied buildings with four units or less are also exempt from the familial status rule *except in advertising*.