

## **Fair Housing is the law!**

It is not lawful to deny someone the opportunity to live where they want and can afford to live. If you believe you are being treated unfairly, take the following steps to protect yourself:

1. Keep a written record of any meetings and/or phone calls you have with a landlord, property manager, real estate agent, loan officer or insurance agent. Write down the person's name, title, company, and the date and time of the discussion. Write down what happened, what was said and what was promised.
2. Keep copies of any documents you signed, applications, leases, receipts, as well as any documents that were given to you.
3. Contact the Fair Housing Hotline:  
1-800-850-0467

More Resources and Information on Fair Housing and Renter Rights Can be Found Online:

Knox County Metropolitan Housing Authority:

[http://www.knoxmha.org/fair\\_housing.htm](http://www.knoxmha.org/fair_housing.htm)

U.S. Housing and Urban Development:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp)

The local Fair Housing Program is here to help you by answering your housing questions, providing education on your rights and responsibilities and assisting you in filing a fair housing complaint. If you have experienced discrimination please call 1-800-850-0467.

You should be careful if one of the following happens to you:

- You are told the apartment you want to rent is not available after you have completed an application.
- You are told you cannot rent an apartment because of your children.
- You are asked to sign blank or incomplete documents.
- You are told you might like "another neighborhood" or you cannot "afford" the neighborhood."
- You receive door-to-door, telephone, or mail solicitations that promise financial assistance or services but ask for personal information, like a social security number, or payment up front.

Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is too good to be true!!!!

## **Knox County Fair Housing Guide**



EQUAL HOUSING  
OPPORTUNITY

Knox County will not discriminate against any application on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, familial status or handicap.

**Knox County's Fair Housing Hotline:  
1-800-850-0467**

Knox County Commissioners' Office  
117 E. High Street Ste 161  
Mt. Vernon, OH 43050  
(740) 393-6703

## Renting

Housing discrimination is illegal. Fair housing means you may freely choose a place to live without regard to your race, military status, color, religion, sex, nationality, disability status or because of your children.

If you have a disability, the fair housing laws protect you. The fair housing laws protect people with mental retardation, mental illness, cerebral palsy, visual and hearing impairments, HIV and AIDS, and, physical impairments that require walkers, wheelchairs and canes. It also protects people who need companion animals and/or personal attendants.

If you have children, you cannot be denied housing simply because you have children this includes pregnant women, families with children, adult guardians of children, and households in the process of gaining custody of children.

If you have any questions about housing discrimination, contact the Fair Housing Program Hotline: 1-800-850-0467

You can also contact:

The Ohio Civil Rights Commission:  
(614) 466-5928

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development:  
(800) 669-9777 / TDD (800) 927-9275

Ohio Legal Aid:  
(866) Aid-Ohio

Leasing usually requires signing a legal document which is binding between landlord and tenant for a definite time period. Many tenants never sign a lease. If you do not, that does not mean you do not have the same rights as a tenant who has a lease. However, oral agreements are not recommended, so ask to get all terms and conditions written down. Anything that is written will protect you.

If you do not have a lease you should:

- Get the name and address of your landlord.
- Know when and where rent is to be paid.
- Know the utilities you will pay and the utilities the landlord will pay.

If you see things in the rental unit that need to be repaired, it is a good idea not to move in until the repairs are made.

Be careful if the landlord promises to pay you to make repairs. Make sure agreements are definite and promises are in writing.

If you are living in a unit that needs repairs, request those repairs in writing and give a reasonable amount of time for the landlord to complete the repairs. The landlord is responsible for making the unit livable and in good working order. If your landlord is not meeting these obligations, you should call the Fair Housing Hotline, 1-800-850-0467.

**Remember: Housing Discrimination is illegal!**