

## Enforcement of Fair Housing Laws

Memphis Fair Housing Center (MFHC) investigates complaints of discrimination because of their mental or physical disability.

A consumer does not have to prove that he was a victim of discrimination. MFHC will conduct an investigation to determine if discrimination has occurred.

After the investigation, the consumer is notified of the results. If the complaint is credible, MFHC will contact the landlord or owner and attempt to resolve the issue by contacting the landlord or owner.

If these contacts fail, an administrative complaint may be filed with the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or a lawsuit can be filed in federal court.

## Seeking Assistance?

Contact Memphis Fair Housing Center:

**901.432.4663**

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Experienced attorneys and housing counselors can provide information, document the facts, and investigate the problem. If appropriate, they can assist with an administrative action or provide court representation.

Services are free, regardless of income.



This pamphlet is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice. For a specific problem, contact an attorney or a housing professional.

# Fair Housing for Persons With Disabilities



It is against the law to deny housing, or to refuse a request for an accommodation, because a person has a mental or a physical disability.

Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc.  
Memphis Fair Housing Center  
22 North Front St., 11th Floor  
Memphis, TN 38103

**Free help is available.**

## Who is protected?

A person who has, or is believed to have a disability, as well as friends, relatives, and associates of persons with disabilities are protected by law.

## What is Illegal?

- ✓ Denying housing to a person because of his disability.
- ✓ Setting different terms and conditions for a person who have a disability, such as a higher security deposit.
- ✓ Steering or directing a person to or away from certain housing or apartment units.
- ✓ Failing to make a “reasonable modification”, such as installing a curb cut or a ramp so that a wheelchair user can enter and exit certain areas.
- ✓ Failing to make a “reasonable accommodation” for a person with a disability, which is an exception to policies or rules. For example, a “no pet” policy will not apply if a blind person requested to have a seeing eye dog or that a parking space be reserved even though parking for others tenants is on a first-come, first served basis.

## What is a disability?

- ✓ A disability is any mental or physical condition that limits a person’s ability to perform daily life tasks.
- ✓ Physical disability includes limits on a person’s ability to walk, hear, see, talk, breath, perform manual tasks, and the basic day-to-day skills.
- ✓ Mental disability includes retardation, bipolar disease, psychosis, schizophrenia, and the inability to understand and interpret information.
- ✓ Disability covers those with AIDS and related illnesses, as well as persons who are in, or who completed, an alcohol or drug treatment program.

## Accessibility Requirements

All ground floor units in apartments built after March 1991 must be fully accessible to persons with disabilities. This includes:

- ✓ Door entrances and exterior routes.
- ✓ Public and common areas, such as the laundry room.
- ✓ Doors with usable handles.
- ✓ Interior routes within the unit.
- ✓ Lower light fixtures and controls.
- ✓ Reinforced bathrooms walls for handrail installation.
- ✓ Kitchens and bathrooms spaces for wheelchairs use.

