



Get the facts!

Fair Housing and Renters:

Across the nation, approximately 35% of the population live in renter occupied housing. Fair Housing laws exist to protect both current and prospective renters. Open Communities is here to help make our rental communities a better place to live and ensure everyone is treated without discrimination.

In addition to fair housing laws, individual states, counties, or municipalities may have further landlord and tenant ordinances.

Crime Free/Nuisance Ordinances:

Some local communities have adopted crime free or nuisance ordinances. These ordinances may require a property owner/manager to complete a criminal background screening. **The presence of a criminal background or arrests does not necessarily exclude a person from housing.** You are encouraged to apply to live in the rental unit.

Recognizing Discrimination:

These days, housing discrimination is usually subtler than a slammed door or a rude statement. Unsuspecting apartment seekers may be politely turned away from the home of their choice even if they are qualified to live there. You have the right to equal treatment when renting. Federal, state, and local laws protect each one of us from being discriminated against. If you have heard disparaging remarks such as these while looking for an apartment, you may have experienced housing discrimination:

- “We don’t rent to more than two people for a two-bedroom apartment.”
- “You can’t build a ramp for access to the building, it violates building codes.”
- “I am sorry; I cannot work with you through a translator.”
- “The community room isn’t available to everyone; we have Christian worship services on Sundays.”
- “We just rented the apartment.” But the unit is still available the next day.

When you contact Open Communities, our fair housing experts will evaluate the facts of your situation and talk with you about your rights and options.

What to do if you feel you are treated unfairly:

- Contact Open communities Fair Housing staff at 847-501-5760
- Document the problem
- Keep detailed records of conversations and the outcome
- Save all receipts, copies of application forms, business cards, and other relevant documents
- Don’t delay if you’re considering filing a complaint – there are time limits.

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Open Communities is a leading voice for housing, economic and social justice in north suburban Chicago, working to promote inclusive communities that are welcoming to all.