

# What is Housing Discrimination?

California and Federal fair housing laws protect renters and homeowners from discrimination and harassment in housing based upon an individual's status as a member of a "Protected Class."



## WHAT ACTIONS ARE PROHIBITED?

Under California and Federal fair housing laws, it is illegal for housing providers to take certain discriminatory actions based on a renter's or homeowner's membership in a "Protected Class." These actions include:

- ❌ **Refusing** to sell, rent, or lease housing accommodations.
- ❌ **Providing** different or inferior terms and conditions of sale or rental.
- ❌ **Making** statements or advertising about a rental or a sale that show a preference or limitation.
- ❌ **Misrepresenting** the availability of a property.
- ❌ **Refusing** to grant a reasonable accommodation to a person with a disability.
- ❌ **Refusing** to allow a person with disability to make reasonable modification of a property, at their own expense.
- ❌ **Terminating** a tenancy for a discriminatory reason.
- ❌ **Harassment.**
- ❌ **Retaliating** against individuals who advocate for their fair housing rights.



## WHAT ARE THE PROTECTED CLASSES?

The California fair housing laws prohibit discrimination based on the following criteria:

Disability, mental or physical	National Origin	Age
Familial Status	Race, Color	Sex, Gender
Source of Income	Gender Identity, Gender Expression	Sexual Orientation
Religion	Marital Status	Arbitrary Characteristics

# WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?

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## Call the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley at (408) 280-2424.

Our office can conduct an intake and inform you of your fair housing rights. In some circumstances, we may be able to provide counsel and advice or legal representation on discrimination issues. Our office primarily assists with disability discrimination issues related to reasonable accommodation denials.

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## Contact another local legal aid organization.

**Project Sentinel** (1-800-324-7468) investigates complaints of housing discrimination. You can call Project Sentinel and tell them how you have been discriminated against. They will ask you questions about your case and determine whether they can do an investigation on your behalf.

**Bay Area Legal Aid** (1-800-551-5554) provides counsel and advice on fair housing matters.

**Asian Law Alliance** (1-408-287-9710) provides counsel and advice on fair housing matters.

**Senior Adult Legal Assistance** (1-408-295-5991) provides counsel and advice on fair housing matters to individuals age 60 or older.

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## Make a complaint to a government agency.

There are state and federal agencies that are responsible for enforcing the fair housing laws. These agencies can investigate discrimination complaints, enforce fair housing laws, and facilitate mediation. You can file a discrimination complaint with them directly, either by phone or online.

### **California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH)**

1-800-884-1684 or <http://www.dfeh.ca.gov/Contact.htm>

### **United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

1-800-347-3749 or <https://portalapps.hud.gov/FHEO903/Form903/Form903Start.action>

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