

Fair Housing What You Need to Know

Landlord Tenant and

Housing Discrimination

In This Module

- ◆ Lease and Landlord Tenant
- ◆ The Fair Housing Laws

LANDLORD – TENANT the lease agreement

WHAT IS A LEASE

- ◆ A lease is a contract between two parties.

The **landlord agrees to allow you to live on his property** for a certain period of time (usually six months to one year) and **you agree to pay a certain amount in monthly installments to live there**

TENANT OBLIGATIONS

Pay the rent on time.



Keep the apartment and the surrounding area clean and in good condition.

Keep noise to a level that will not disturb you neighbors.

Repair any damage occurring to the apartment through the fault of the tenant, family members or guests.

Notify landlord at once of major damage.

Give the landlord permission to enter the apartment at reasonable times and when he or she gives advance notice to inspect it or to make any necessary repairs.

LANDLORD OBLIGATIONS

- ◆ Provide a clean apartment when the tenant moves in.
 - Clean common areas (hallways, stairs, yards, entryways).
 - Make sure that there are well lit hallways and entryways.
 - Provide properly working plumbing and heating (both hot and cold running water)
 - Obey the local, state and federal laws against discrimination
 - Obey the landlord tenant laws

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

◆ Dates: when the lease begins and ends, move in dates, move out dates, when the rent is due

Termination of the lease, for instance, a fee for moving out before the end of the lease and reasons the landlord will evict

Fees for late rent payments

Whether or not the landlord agrees to provide furniture or appliances

Whether or not the landlord allows pets

Rules for the use of common facilities
(pools, laundry rooms, exercise rooms, meeting rooms, tennis courts)

Who will pay for utilities (gas, electricity)

RED FLAGS (THINGS TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT)



Very high late fees

High fees for terminating the lease early, or not being allowed to terminate early

Unusual restrictions (on cooking, coming and going at night, having visitors)

Anything that seems discriminatory

A deposit that is more than two months rent

DOCUMENTS TO KEEP



A copy of your signed lease

Take pictures of the unit when you move in, make sure the date is documented and save them

Take pictures of the unit when you move out, save them for at least 30 days after you move out

Receipts for repairs you may have to make or agree to make

Receipts or cancelled checks documenting rent payments

Housing Code and the Health Dept.

◆ The Health Department will:

- Send someone to inspect the unit for violations
- Contact the landlord, notify him or her of the violations and give the landlord a certain number of days to make repairs
- If the landlord doesn't make the repairs, the Health Department will allow you to pay your rent into an account that they maintain.
- If the landlord still refuses to make repairs, the Health Department will give the escrowed money to you so you can find another place to live.

Examples of code violations

- ◆ Gas leaks
- Electrical or wiring problems
- Insufficient heat
- Defective plumbing (water, toilet, bathing facilities)
- Pest infestation (Insect or rodent)
- Gas or electric shut offs
- Structural defects (sagging floors, falling ceilings, unsafe stairs, etc.)

WHEN YOU MOVE OUT

If you decide not to renew your lease, make sure you give your landlord as much notice as your lease may require

Clean the unit and make any repairs that may be needed (fill holes from hanging pictures, etc.)

Give the landlord your new address

Get a receipt for the keys when you return them to the landlord and keep note of the date

Within 30 days, the landlord must return the deposit to you and document any money that he or she keeps for repairs



Housing Discrimination: Your rights under the law



The Federal Fair Housing Laws

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Sex
- Religion
- Family Status (Children under 18 and pregnant mothers)
- Disability

State and Local Fair Housing Laws

- ◆ The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act
 - Age—over 40



- ◆ The Pittsburgh City Code
 - Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

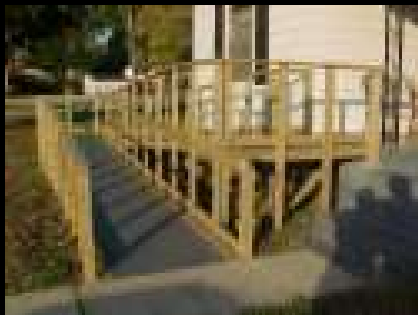
What Conduct Is Covered

- ◆ Refusal to sell, rent or negotiate
- ◆ Different Terms or Conditions
- ◆ Discriminatory Advertising
- ◆ Otherwise make unavailable
- ◆ Blockbusting
- ◆ Discriminatory Financing, Appraisals, Insurance
- ◆ Denial of Brokerage Services
- ◆ Threats, Coercion and Intimidation
- ◆ Retaliation



Special Provisions for Disability

- ◆ Reasonable Accommodation



- ◆ Reasonable Modification



- ◆ Access Requirements

Proving Discrimination

◆ Testing

- The Fair Housing Partnership

◆ Other Evidence

- Witnesses
- Phone Messages
- Paperwork



◆ Keep Good Records



Proving Discrimination

SUBPOENAS

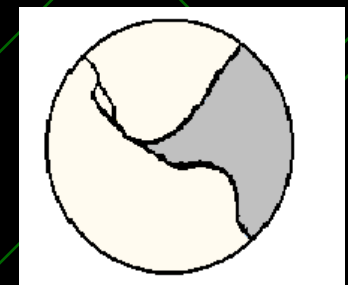
- HUD



- PA Human Relations Commission



- Pittsburgh Commission



Enforcement & Remedies

- ◆ Enforcement
 - HUD
 - PA & PGH Commissions
 - Civil Courts
- ◆ Remedies
 - Monetary
 - Injunctive Relief
- ◆ Penalties



Legal Assistance

- ◆ Private Attorneys
 - Civil Rights



- ◆ The Fair Housing Partnership
 - Staff Attorney
 - Panel of Cooperating Attorneys

TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

If you think a landlord is discriminating: Fair Housing Partnership: **(412) 391-2535**

About Housing Code violations: Allegheny County Health Department, Housing Code Enforcement, **(412) 350-4046**

If a landlord is unfairly withholding your deposit: Office of Consumer Protection **(412) 565-5135**