

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I be charged extra in rent or fees because I have an assistance animal?

No, your landlord may not charge you extra in rent, fees, or deposits due to needing and having an assistance animal.

Can I be denied shelter in a certain area because I don't fit the racial demographics of that area?

No, a housing provider cannot refuse housing due to a person's race.

Can I request disaster assistance or resources in a language other than English?

Yes, any entity that receives federal funding must provide meaningful language access.

Can I be placed in a complex restricted to persons who are 55 years or age or older if I am under age 55?

Yes, an exemption allows persons under 55 years of age to live in certain age-restricted housing for up to 1 year after a presidential disaster declaration.

HAVE A FAIR HOUSING CLAIM?

**Call the Legal Aid
Fair Housing Helpline
1-870-338-9834**



The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government.



A FAIR HOUSING GUIDE FOR PERSONS IMPACTED BY A DISASTER

LEGAL AID of ARKANSAS
Equal Access to Justice
Fighting Poverty, Maintaining Dignity, Assuring Justice

THE FAIR HOUSING ACT

The Fair Housing Act (FHA) prohibits discrimination in housing against individuals based on their:

Race: a person's race or the race of persons with whom one associates

Color: a person's skin color

National Origin: the country of one's birth or the nationality of one's ancestors

Religion: a person's religious beliefs or denomination

Sex: a person's biological characteristics including sexual orientation, gender identity, and instances of sexual harassment

Familial Status: refers to families in which one or more children under 18 years of age live with a parent, a person with legal custody, or a designee from the parent or legal custodian. Also applies to pregnant persons and those in the process of securing legal custody of a child or children under 18 years of age.

Disability: a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of having such a disability, or being regarded as having such impairment. This includes people with HIV or AIDS, and people who are erroneously thought to have HIV or AIDS.

WHY DOES FAIR HOUSING MATTER IN A DISASTER?

1. The Fair Housing Act's protections against discrimination includes persons who need housing or shelter during and after a disaster. Fair Housing rights are not waived or put on hold, regardless of the severity of a disaster or resulting difficult conditions.

Incidents of housing discrimination can increase during disasters, particularly during conditions that result in the loss of homes. Housing discrimination can also heighten the impact of a disaster on protected classes, which can lead to increased financial difficulties, housing instability, and emotional and mental health distress. These impacts can result in long lasting difficulties in recovering from a disaster.

2.

SIGNS OF POSSIBLE DISCRIMINATION

- A disaster recovery housing counselor refuses to discuss housing in certain neighborhoods or says that you would feel "more comfortable" in certain neighborhoods.
- You are denied housing in certain places (including shelters) because you have an assistance animal.
- A housing counselor, landlord, or housing employee promises housing in exchange for sexual favors.
- Disaster recovery efforts are disproportionately benefitting members of one race over another.
- A housing provider states that they would prefer to rent to a single, Christian, woman.