



**MANSFIELD  
RICHLAND COUNTY  
FAIR HOUSING**

**The Basic of Landlord/Tenant Law**



## **What is Fair Housing Act?**

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability (the City of Mansfield also includes age, marital status and ancestry) by housing providers, such as landlords and real estate companies as well as other entities, such as municipalities, banks or other lending institutions, and homeowners insurance companies.

## **Fair Housing Act overview**

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing because of:

- \* Race or color
- \* National origin
- \* Religion
- \* Sex
- \* Familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians; pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18)
- \* Disability

### **Mansfield, Ohio also includes:**

- \* Age
- \* Marital Status
- \* Ancestry

## **What is prohibited?**

In the Sale and Rental of Housing: No one may take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or disability: (age, marital status and ancestry).

- ▶ Refuse to rent or sell housing
- ▶ Refuse to negotiate for housing
- ▶ Make housing unavailable
- ▶ Deny a dwelling
- ▶ Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- ▶ Provide different housing services or facilities
- ▶ Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental
- ▶ For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting) or
- ▶ Deny anyone access to a membership in a facility or service (such as a multiple-listing service) related to the sale or rental of housing.

The Fair Housing Act does not exempt owner-occupied dwellings with four or less units.

**In Addition: It is illegal for anyone to:**

- Threaten, coerce, intimidate or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise that right.
- Advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability. This prohibition against discriminatory advertising applies to single-family and owner-occupied housing that is otherwise exempt from the Fair Housing Act.

**What do I do if I believe I have been the victim of illegal discrimination in housing?**

Individuals who believe that they have been victims of an illegal housing practice may file a complaint with the local Fair Housing Office, the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), or file their own lawsuit in Federal or state court. The complaint must be filed within one year of the incident you believe to be housing discrimination.

Either The Ohio Civil Rights Commission or HUD will notify you when it receives your complaint with the following actions:

- \* Notify the alleged violator of your complaint and permit that person to submit an answer (this person is also called the respondent).
- \* Investigate your complaint and determine whether there is a reasonable cause to believe the Fair Housing Act has been violated.
- \* Notify you if it cannot complete an investigation within 100 days of receiving your complaint.

**If you or someone associated with you:**

- Has a physical or mental disability (including hearing, mobility and visual
- Has impairment, chronic alcoholism, chronic mental illness, AIDS, AIDS related illnesses, complex and mental retardation that substantially limits one or more major life activities or
- Has a record of such disability or are regarded as having such a disability

**Your landlord may not:**

- Refuse to let you make a reasonable modifications to your dwelling or common-use areas, at your expense, if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services if necessary for the disabled person to use the housing.

Example: A building with a “no pets” policy must allow a visually impaired tenant to keep a guide dog.



### **Conciliation**

The Civil Rights Commission or HUD will try to reach an agreement with the person(s) your complaint is against (the respondent). A conciliation agreement must protect both you and the public interest. If an agreement is signed, there will be no further action on your complaint. However, if HUD has reasonable cause to believe that a conciliation agreement is breached, The Ohio Civil Rights Commission or HUD will recommend that the Attorney General file suit.

### **What if you need help quickly?**

If you need immediate help to stop a serious problem that is being caused by a Fair Housing Act violation, first contact our local Fair Housing Office at Mansfield Community Development Office at (419) 755-9796, or you can contact either the Ohio Civil Rights Commission or HUD. This information is on the back of this booklet.

### **Local Fair Housing Contacts**

Mansfield and Richland County  
City of Mansfield Department of Community Development  
30 North Diamond St.  
Mansfield, OH 44902  
(419) 755-9796

Mansfield/Shelby Ohio  
City of Shelby  
23 W. Main Street  
Shelby, OH 44875  
(419) 347-6310

The Ohio Civil Rights Commission, Cleveland Office  
615 W. Superior Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44113  
(888) 278-7101

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
Housing Discrimination Hotline (800) 669-9777