

COOK COUNTY FAIR HOUSING FACT SHEET
Local Jurisdictions
Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing



Housing discrimination is not only illegal; it contradicts in every way the principles of freedom and opportunity for all citizens. Communities receiving financial assistance from HUD are required to examine and implement strategies to eliminate housing discrimination within their jurisdictions, promote housing opportunities for all protected classes, promote fair housing choice for all people, and maintain records of the analysis and actions to remove barriers to fair housing choice.

The [Fair Housing Act of 1968](#) prohibits the refusal to sell, finance, rent to, or negotiate with any person on the basis of:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion
- Gender
- Disability
- Familial Status

In Illinois, the [Illinois Human Rights Act](#) provides additional protection based upon:

- Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
- Age (40 and above)
- Marital Status
- Order of Protection Status
- Ancestry
- Military Status
- Unfavorable Military Discharge

Through the [Cook County Human Rights Ordinance](#), residents of Cook County have additional protection based upon:

- Parental Status
- Military Discharge Status
- Source of Income
- Housing Status

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: prohibits discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Sec. 109 Title I of the Housing & Community Development Act of 1974: prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or religion in programs and activities receiving financial assistance from HUD's Community Development and Block Grant Program.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: prohibits discrimination based on disability in programs, services, and activities provided or made available by public entities. HUD enforces Title II when it relates to state and local public housing, housing assistance and housing referrals.

Architectural Barriers Act of 1968: requires that buildings and facilities designed, constructed, altered, or leased with certain federal funds after September 1969 must be accessible to and useable by handicapped persons.

Age Discrimination Act of 1975: prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972: prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance.

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What is Fair Housing?

A fair housing market is one in which no consumer is more burdened in making housing choices than any other consumer. Fair Housing is the right for all people to live wherever they choose, to have access to housing (seek, purchase, sell, lease or rent) and enjoy the full use of their homes without unlawful discrimination, interference, coercion, threats, or intimidation by owners, landlords or real estate agents or any other persons.

What is Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)?

Affirmatively furthering fair housing goes beyond uncovering discrimination & developing affordable housing. AFFH is taking proactive steps beyond simply combating discrimination to foster more inclusive communities and access to community assets for all persons protected by the Fair Housing Act. The AFFH process begins with honest and inclusive community conversation and culminates in shaping action plans and other programs that strengthen our neighborhoods and provide the strongest possible foundation for families. It must encompass policies that encourage racial and ethnic integration and include accessibility & housing for larger families. Affirmatively furthering fair housing is accomplished through implementing policies, practices, programs, and development that promotes integration.

Why is Fair Housing Important?

Fair housing goes beyond a physical structure. Affirmatively furthering fair housing creates a housing market which is open, inclusive, and fulfills the diverse needs of all community residents. Fair housing reconnects neighborhoods by ensuring access to quality housing, regardless of race, gender, religious views, familial status, or disability. All citizens have the opportunity to live in close proximity to high-achieving schools, employment opportunities, transportation options, banking services, grocery stores and retail, public services, and public space. Local government reaps benefits from promoting integration by lowering costs for social services, improving revenues through strong property values, and providing a desirable community where households and businesses can thrive.

Fair Housing Enforcement Offices

As a municipality, you must understand and provide training to your staff about fair housing laws and affirmatively furthering fair housing. Stay connected to your local and/or regional fair housing agency, in order to stay informed about fair housing issues, prevent housing discrimination, and to ensure that your community is open and inclusive for all:

Local

All Suburbs: Cook County Commission on Human Rights - www.cookcountyil.gov

City of Chicago: Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Inc. – www.clccrul.org

Southern Cook County: South Suburban Housing Center – www.southsuburbanhousingcenter.org

Northern Cook County: Open Communities – www.interfairhousingcenter.org

West and Northwest Cook County: HOPE Fair Housing Center – www.hopefair.org

State

Illinois Department of Human Rights - www2.illinois.gov/dhr

National

US Department of Housing & Urban Development - www.hud.gov/fairhousing

More information on fair housing and how to affirmatively further fair housing:

Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance - www.cafha.net