

Summary of Fair Housing Laws



This chart summarizes the various fair housing laws applicable to rental and sale of housing in the Chicago metropolitan area. It is not an exhaustive review of the various laws, and there are important provisions not listed here.

| | Federal Fair Housing Act 42 USC § 3601 | Illinois Human Rights Act 775 ILCS 5/3-101 | Cook County Human Rts. Act | Chicago Fair Housing Ord. Muni Code 5-8-010 |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| What does the law cover? | Most housing in the United States | Most housing in Illinois | Most housing in Cook County | Most housing in the City of Chicago |
| What's protected? | Race Color Religion Sex (including sexual harassment) National origin Disability Familial status (children under the age of 18) | Race Color Religion Sex (including sexual harassment) National origin Ancestry Age (40+) Marital status Disability Familial status Sexual orientation (effective 1/2006) Unfavorable military discharge Military status | Race Color Religion Sex (including sexual harassment) National origin Ancestry Age (40+) Marital status Disability Parental status Sexual orientation Source of income (but not Section 8) Military discharge status Housing status | Race Color Religion Sex (including sexual harassment) National origin Ancestry Age (40+) Marital status Disability Parental status Sexual orientation Source of income Military discharge status |

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|--------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| What's prohibited | <p>Refusing to sell or rent, negotiate for sale or rental, or otherwise making unavailable or denying a dwelling because of a person's protected status.</p> <p>Imposing different terms/conditions because of a person's protected status.</p> <p>Making discriminatory statements or publishing discriminatory communications. (Note: Certain exemptions do not apply to this prohibition.)</p> <p>Lying about the availability of a dwelling because of a person's protected status.</p> <p>Blockbusting.</p> <p>Retaliating against, interfering with, or intimidating a person exercising his/her fair housing rights.</p> | <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same. (775 ILCS 5/6-101)</p> | <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Retaliating against or interfering with a person exercising his/her fair housing rights.</p> <p>Aiding, abetting, or compelling a person to violate the Act.</p> | <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>No protection against retaliation.</p> |

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|--|--|---|---|--|
| What's exempted from the law? | <p>Owner-occupied 4-unit (or fewer) buildings. (But not exempted from discriminatory statements.)</p> <p>Rental of single family house by owner (if he/she owns fewer than 3 houses). (But not exempted from discriminatory statements.)</p> <p>Religious organizations and private clubs.</p> <p>Reasonable occupancy limits.</p> <p>Housing for older persons.</p> | <p>Owner-occupied 5-unit (or fewer) buildings.</p> <p>Rental of room in private home.</p> <p>Rental of rooms to persons of the same sex.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> | <p>No size exemption.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> | <p>No size exemption.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> <p>Same.</p> |
| <p>Where to go if you believe your fair housing rights have been violated:</p> <p>See also the attached Resource Guide.</p> | <p>U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)</p> <p>312-353-7776</p> <p>800-669-9777 (tollfree)</p> <p>800-927-9275 (TDD)</p> | <p>Illinois Dept. of Human Rights</p> <p>312-814-6200</p> <p>800-662-3942 (tollfree)</p> <p>312-263-1579 (TDD)</p> | <p>Cook County Commission on Human Rights</p> <p>312-603-1100</p> <p>312-603-1101 (TDD)</p> | <p>Chicago Commission on Human Relations</p> <p>312-744-2852</p> <p>312-744-1088 (TDD)</p> |
| How long do you have to file a complaint? | <p>One (1) year from alleged violation.</p> <p>(Two (2) years if you file directly in federal court.)</p> | <p>One (1) year from alleged violation.</p> <p>(Two (2) years if you file directly in circuit court.)</p> | <p>180 days from alleged violation.</p> | <p>180 days from alleged violation.</p> |