

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS A VICTIM OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION, THE FAIR HOUSING PROJECT MAY BE ABLE TO HELP.  
**855-FHP-PSLS (855) 347-7757**

## How can the Project help me?

1. We may **negotiate** on your behalf with a landlord or other housing provider.
2. We may **investigate** what you think could be housing discrimination through the use of fair housing testing.
3. We may help you **file a complaint** with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or Illinois Department of Human Rights.
4. We may **represent** you if you file a complaint.

## Who does the Project serve?

Our Project serves Winnebago, Boone, Stephenson, Lake, and McHenry Counties. There are no income limits for potential clients.

## How do I contact the Project?

Contact us at  
**855-FHP-PSLS**  
**(855) 347-7757** or  
**pslegal.org/fairhousing**

We will connect you to the Prairie State office that serves the county where you live.

Brindamos ayuda legal gratuita a clientes elegibles en cualquier idioma.

Udostępniamy bezpłatną pomoc prawną dla kwalifikujących się klientów w dowolnym języku.

我们为合格客户提供任何语言的免费法律援助。

Kami ay nagbibigay ng libreng tulong sa karapat-dapat na kliyente sa anumang wika.

نُوقِر المساعدة القانونية مجانًا لعملائنا المؤهلين بكل اللغات.



We provide free legal help to eligible clients in any language.

## About Prairie State Legal Services

Prairie State Legal Services is a not-for-profit law firm that provides civil legal services at no fee to those who qualify. Prairie State has 12 offices serving 36 counties throughout northern and central Illinois. For detailed information about Prairie State Legal Services, see our website at [www.pslegal.org](http://www.pslegal.org).

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**PRAIRIE STATE LEGAL SERVICES**

*Equal Access to Justice*

# Your Right to Fair Housing

Equal Access to  
Housing of Your Choice



# Prairie State Legal Services—Equal Access to Justice

## Fair Housing: What does it mean?

“Fair Housing” is the right to choose housing free from unlawful discrimination.

Under the federal Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful for a housing provider to discriminate against anyone due to their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and familial status. Familial status refers to households with children, households seeking custody or adoption of children, or women who are pregnant.

Illinois fair housing laws provide additional protection against discrimination on the basis of ancestry, age, military or military discharge status, marital status, protective order status, sexual orientation or gender identity, and pregnancy.

Local ordinances in your city or county may provide additional protections.

## Who must provide fair housing?

- Building owners/landlords
- Management companies
- Public housing authorities
- Real estate agents
- Home sellers
- Insurance companies
- Mortgage brokers and companies
- Banks or other lending institutions
- Government agencies



## What does housing discrimination look like and what are some examples?

Housing discrimination can take many forms and it is not always obvious. For example, it may be unlawful where a housing provider:

- *rents only to English speakers*
- *advertises in a way that favors one group over another*
- *threatens or intimidates or retaliates against you because you complained of housing discrimination*
- *refuses to let you build a wheelchair ramp or denies other reasonable accommodations or modifications*
- *steers you to a neighborhood where “you would be more comfortable”*
- *does not allow support animals or allows only service dogs*

**“Fair Housing” is the right to choose housing, free from unlawful discrimination.**

- *denies mortgage loans in certain neighborhoods or charges higher rates or fails to provide loan information*
- *falsely states the apartment is not available*
- *refuses to rent to you believing your children will be too noisy*
- *allows harassment of tenants who are transgender or gay*
- *refuses to rent to you because of a past arrest record*
- *sexually harasses you or evicts you after you complain of sexual harassment*
- *tries to evict you because you secured an order of protection as a victim of domestic violence.*

## What is fair housing testing?

We investigate by a process called “testing”. A fair housing test is a planned interaction between a housing provider and a trained volunteer pretending to seek housing (known as a “tester”). A tester’s purpose is to gather information. The gathered information may indicate unlawful housing discrimination or indicate a housing provider is complying with fair housing laws. In many cases, testing is the best way to uncover evidence to support a fair housing claim.

