



Know Your Fair Housing Rights

What is the Fair Housing Act?

The Fair Housing Act (FHA) is a federal law that protects certain people from housing discrimination. It protects your rights related to: renting/buying housing; receiving housing-related services; requesting accommodations, modifications, and maintenance/repairs; and not being retaliated against. It protects people based on their disability, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, and familial status.

You are protected under the FHA under disability if you are:

- Someone that has or had a physical or mental impairment that impacts your ability to function on a daily basis, or
- Associated with someone who has a disability (family member, roommate, guest, etc.)

Reasonable Accommodations

If you are protected under disability, you can request a reasonable accommodation under the FHA to change a policy if it is necessary for you to be able to use your home. The request must be:

- Necessary to minimize your symptoms so you can keep living in the housing, and
- Reasonable (request cannot cost too much, create too much paperwork, or make landlord change the services they provide).

The request for reasonable accommodation should be in writing and include:

- You are a person with a disability
- How your disability is affecting you
- The reasonable accommodation you need
- Why the accommodation is necessary to minimize the symptoms of your disability so you can live in the home

You should include a letter of support from a medical provider that explains how the symptoms of the disabilities stop you from using your current housing or securing new housing.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include:

- Receiving repairs in a timely manner because the air conditioning is not working and it's increasing your risk of complications like a stroke because of your medical condition.
- Effective communication [American Sign Language (ASL), documents in Optical Character Reader (OCR) format, in-person communication, translators, etc.] with your landlord or housing authority because of a disability.
- Changing the rent due date to accommodate when you receive Social Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) because you are unable to work due to your disabilities, and your SSI/SSDI does not come until after rent is due.

Reasonable Modifications

You can also request a reasonable modification, such as structural changes to the home. Make the request the same way that you would request a reasonable accommodation. Examples of reasonable modifications include:

- A ramp leading to your home to help your wheelchair get over the threshold
- Installing grab bars in the shower to help with stability

Who pays for a reasonable modification? In general, if the modification is in a:

- Public-use area such as a sidewalk, the front office or the mailbox, the landlord pays for it
- Private-use area such as inside a home, the tenant pays for it

If your landlord/housing provider ignores your request, denies your request, makes discriminatory statements, or retaliates against you because you are a person with a disability, contact Disability Rights Texas (DRTx). More information on how to address discrimination can be found on our website.

For information about what to do if your rights are violated, scan the QR code below or call 1-800-252-9108.

