

# HELP FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS



If you have questions about your legal responsibilities as a housing provider, **MCHR** can provide guidance to you and your staff about compliance with applicable laws.

To schedule training,  
contact the **MCHR**  
Training Institute  
at 816-889-2197.



## Contact Information

### Missouri Commission on Human Rights

P.O. Box 1129  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1129  
[www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights](http://www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights)  
**573-751-3325**  
**Toll Free: 877-781-4236**

### U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Gateway Tower II, 4th Floor  
400 State Avenue  
Kansas City, KS 66101-2406  
[www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)  
**913-551-6958**  
**Toll Free: 800-743-5323**

## Relay Missouri

If calling by home or cell phone, dial 711.  
All other callers should dial 800-735-2966.



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MCHR-51

**Missouri**  
**Commission on Human Rights**

P.O. Box 1129 • Jefferson City, MO 65102-1129

# FAIR HOUSING LAWS



Protect Your Right  
To Live Where You Want



**Missouri**  
**Commission on Human Rights**

# FAIR HOUSING IS NOT AN OPTION



## IT'S THE LAW!

The Federal Fair Housing Act and the Missouri Human Rights Act prohibit discrimination in housing rental, sales, and lending due to race, color, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, sex, or having children in the household.



### Alert!

**A tenant cannot be charged a higher deposit because a landlord believes use of a wheelchair will cause damage to walls or carpet.**

## Protections for Persons with Disabilities

### Your Right: Freedom from Discrimination

It is illegal to be discriminated against because you have a physical or mental disability, are perceived to have a disability, or live or associate with a person who has a disability.

### Your Right: Reasonable Accommodations

Landlords are required to make reasonable accommodations, such as changes and exceptions to rules, policies, practices, and services, when the accommodation is necessary for a person with a disability to have the same opportunity as a person without a disability to use and enjoy housing. Accommodation requests must be reasonable; landlords do not have to make changes that are an undue burden. Reasonable accommodations can include reserving a close-up parking space for a tenant with limited mobility and changing a strict “no pets” policy to allow for service animals.

### Your Right: Reasonable Modifications

Reasonable modifications are physical changes to a housing unit built before March 13, 1991, that allow a person with a disability full use, access, and enjoyment of a dwelling. Landlords cannot deny a tenant’s request for reasonable modifications needed to make the housing accessible to and usable by a person with a disability. In most cases,

## Fair Housing: Opening Doors for All Missourians

alterations to the property are at the tenant’s expense. A landlord may oversee modifications to the property and require the tenant return the unit to its original state when he or she vacates. Modifications must be reasonable, and the landlord does not have to make or allow the tenant to make overly burdensome changes. Widening a door, installing a wheelchair ramp, and installing grab bars in the bathroom are common reasonable modifications.

### Your Right: Accessible Housing

Laws mandating accessible multi-family dwellings apply when:

- the building was built for first occupancy after March 13, 1991; and
- has four or more units; and
- the unit is on the ground floor or in a building with an elevator.

To be accessible, housing must have doorways and hallways wide enough for a wheelchair, accessible routes to common areas (no steps, not too steep), light switches and thermostats in locations reachable from a sitting position, and kitchens and bathrooms large enough so that a person in a wheelchair can navigate the space.

**For additional information  
about accessibility requirements  
and design, visit  
[www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights](http://www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights).**

## Protections for Families with Children

### Your Right: Housing Choice

It is illegal to refuse to rent a dwelling to anyone because he or she has legal custody of a child under the age of 18 living in the home. The law protects pregnant women, families in the process of adopting a child, and legal guardians, such as foster parents or grandparents. Landlords are prohibited from discriminatory actions such as refusing to rent an upstairs unit to a family with small children. Communities that qualify as designated housing for older persons, however, may refuse tenancy to younger persons, including children.

## Have you been told the apartment is too small for kids?

If a landlord refuses to rent to a family with multiple children due to “overcrowding” – claiming there are too many people per square foot – this may be discrimination based on familial status.

### Alert!

**It is illegal for a landlord to advertise for a renter or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex, or having children in the household.**