

Bordering Lake Michigan, the City of Evanston is a welcoming community that opens its doors to everyone. People make their homes here to enjoy its lakefront, tree-lined streets, historic architecture, excellent schools, and varied recreational offerings. The city is also home to a vibrant arts community, prosperous business ventures, and top-ranked Northwestern University.

With a strong public transit system providing access within town as well as to the world-class city of Chicago, Evanston remains a walkable and bikable town dedicated to environmental well-being and sustainability.

Equally important is the city's longstanding commitment to diversity, fairness, and equal opportunity, which had its beginnings in Evanston's historical role as a center of anti-slavery efforts before the Civil War. That tradition continues today with a strong dedication to providing fair housing opportunities to all.

You Want to Rent or Buy a Home in Evanston. What Are Your Rights?

Nothing is more important than the place we call home. It's where we live our lives, eat our meals, raise our children or care for our parents - where we work, relax, and rest.

Unfortunately, people may still be unfairly prevented from acquiring or moving to a home because of individual factors that shouldn't count, such as race or the presence of children in the household. That's why it's important that you understand your basic housing rights, which are guaranteed to everyone under law.

The Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 (Title VIII) and related federal, state, and local laws are designed to guarantee open housing opportunities that are free from discrimination.

"Fair housing" means that you have the right to equal treatment from landlords and their agents, real estate professionals, bankers, insurance companies, and government agencies when you rent or buy a home.

In Evanston, it is illegal to discriminate against someone due to their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, presence of children, age, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity, order of protection, source of income, whether they were once homeless, or unfavorable military discharge.



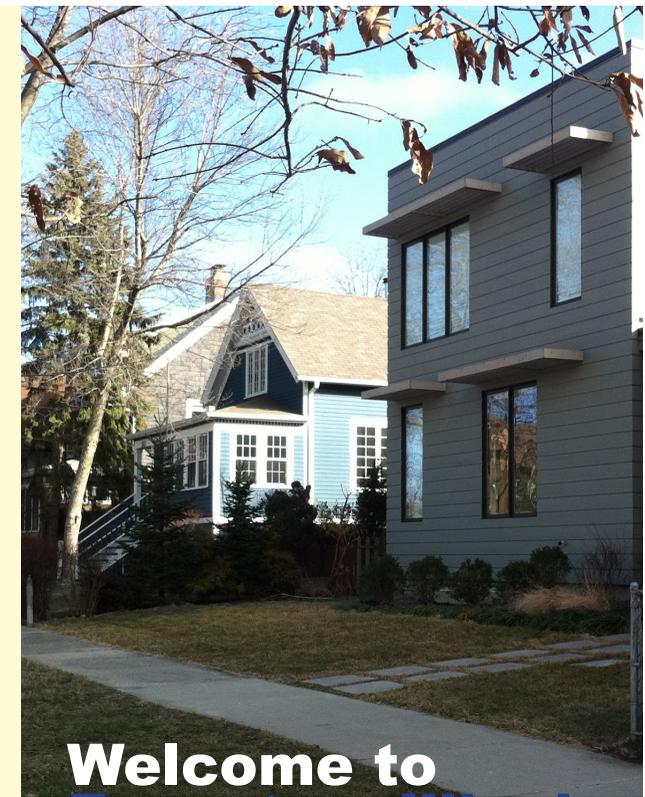
How Interfaith Housing Center Can Help

The Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs will evaluate the facts of your situation at no charge and inform you of your rights and options. When appropriate, the Housing Center can

- investigate your claim of housing discrimination
- assist you in filing a fair housing complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or other enforcement agency
- help resolve housing-related conflicts
- refer your case to attorneys who specialize in fair housing law

Learn more at www.interfaithhousingcenter.org. The Interfaith Housing Center is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to fair and affordable housing. Founded in 1972, the Center advances housing justice by promoting open, diverse, and inclusive communities throughout Chicago's northern suburbs.

Learn more about the City of Evanston's fair housing laws at www.cityofevanston.org. Contact the Community and Economic Development Department of the City of Evanston at (847) 859-7889 or visit the Evanston Civic Center at 2100 Ridge Ave., Third Floor, Evanston, Illinois 60201.



**Welcome to
Evanston, Illinois**
Know Your Fair Housing Rights

"The strength of a nation lies in the homes of its people."

— Abraham Lincoln



City of
Evanston™

How to Recognize Housing Discrimination

Housing discrimination today is rarely blatant but it still exists. Listen for the phrases below – they could be warning signs of discrimination:

- “I rented that apartment right after you called.”
- “That house just went off the market.”
- “This building is for students [or empty nesters] only.”
- “Ms. Hernandez, a two-bedroom condo is too small for you and your mother – and your boy and girl can’t share a bedroom.”
- “Children can only live on the first floor.”
- “This is a no-pets building, so you can’t bring your guide dog in here.”
- “Add a ramp for your wheelchair? Sorry, we won’t do that.”
- “Do you think you can afford this neighborhood?” or “You wouldn’t be happy in this neighborhood.”
- “Your interest rate will be higher if you buy in that neighborhood.”

It is illegal to

- **Refuse to sell or rent** to someone because of his or her status in a group protected by fair housing law (called a “protected class”), such as those listed to the left.
- **Advertise or state a preference** that discriminates against protected individuals or families.
- **Impose unreasonable limits** on when or where children can play.
- **Unfairly restrict or charge fees** to someone who uses a wheelchair or support animal for her or his disability.
- **Refuse to make reasonable alterations** to accommodate a resident’s disability.
- **Fail to enforce rules** against discrimination-based harassment among residents in an apartment or multi-family building.
- **Threaten or interfere** with anyone taking action to protect his or her housing rights or anyone who helps them to do so.



What Types of Housing Are Covered?

Houses and condominiums for sale or rent
Apartments for rent, including sublets
Retirement communities
“Independent” and assisted living facilities

What Can You Do?

Evanston is committed to diversity and is opposed to any housing discrimination. The City of Evanston has contracted with the Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs, a not-for-profit fair housing agency, to help enforce all applicable fair housing laws.

If you feel you are being treated unfairly, take the following steps listed to the right:

- Contact the Interfaith Housing Center at (847) 501-5760 as soon as possible after the incident.
- Document the problem by writing down what was said during meetings and phone calls with the landlord, property manager, real estate agent, loan officer or insurance agent. Keep detailed records of what happens afterward.
- Save copies of any documents involving your home, such as receipts, lease agreements, application forms, business cards, or correspondence between you and your landlord or bank.
- If you are considering filing a complaint, don’t delay. A complaint must be filed with HUD or the City of Evanston within a year of the most recent discriminatory act. You also have the right under the Fair Housing Act to file a private lawsuit in Federal District Court within two years of the incident.

