



Fair housing is the law!

Where you can find your rights:

- The federal Fair Housing Act
- The North Carolina Fair Housing Act
- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The NC Persons with Disabilities Protection Act

To learn more about your housing rights contact:

- Disability Rights North Carolina at (919) 856-2195
- Legal Aid NC Fair Housing Project at (855) 797-3247
- NC Human Relations Commission at (866) 324-7474
- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at (800) 669-9777

YOUR HOUSING RIGHTS

People with disabilities have the right to fair housing.

This means that landlords and sellers cannot treat you unfairly because of your disability. For example, a landlord cannot refuse to rent to you because you or your family member has a disability.

Does the law protect you?

Rental housing covered by the laws:

- apartment complexes
- public housing
- Section 8 housing
- single family home for rent IF the owner owns at least three properties altogether
- a room or unit for rent IF the building was meant to house four families or less and the owner also lives in the building
- most school dormitories

Buying or own a home?

You may be protected against discrimination by your real estate agent, mortgage broker, or homeowner's association.

People with disabilities are protected by the laws.

A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Major life activities include hearing, seeing, walking, working, etc. Illegal drug use is not a protected disability.

If you have a condition that flares up sometimes or has gone into remission, you may still be entitled to the protections of the law.

You may lose the protection of the laws if your actions pose a danger to others.

If you are not sure if you are protected by the laws, call Disability Rights NC at (919) 856-2195.

Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications

A **reasonable accommodation** is a change to a rule or how things are usually done. The need for the change must be connected to your disability.

A **reasonable modification** is a change to your home or its surroundings that is needed because of your disability. Renters usually have to pay for the modification unless it is subsidized housing. Landlords can ask for the unit to be returned to its original condition if the changes would limit their ability to rent the unit.

Requesting reasonable accommodations or modifications:

- It is your job to ask for them. You have the right to ask for them **at any time** – even if you have been living there for a long time.

- You can be asked for documentation if it is not obvious why you need one.

- Put your request in writing and keep a copy for your files.

If you ask for a reasonable accommodation or modification, it should be granted unless it would be an undue burden or fundamental alteration. An **undue burden** means that the change you asked for costs too much money. A **fundamental alteration** means the change you asked for is too extreme.

If your request is turned down, offer alternatives that cost less or are less drastic.

Examples of Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications

- allowing service animals in “no pet” housing
- assigning a parking space for person with limited mobility
- allowing a tenant to move to a more accessible unit
- allowing a live-in aid
- accepting rent later in the month because the tenant’s monthly check arrives after the first
- removing carpets for tenant with chemical sensitivities
- installation of visually alerting fire alarms and doorbells
- installation of ramps
- installation of accessible knobs on cabinetry or “push to open” hinges
- installation of accessible door handles
- installation of grab bars and roll-in shower in bathroom
- installation of lift for the community pool

Animals in “No Pet” Housing

Service Animals

You are allowed to have a service animal in your home, even if there is a “no pets” policy. **Service animals** are individually trained to work for a person with a disability. Your landlord is allowed to ask how your service animal assists with your disability, and for proof that it is in good health and has current vaccinations. Your landlord cannot charge you a pet deposit for your service animal.

There is no required certification or registration for service animals. There is a *voluntary* service animal registry maintained by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. For more information, call (919) 733-0390.

Comfort, therapy or emotional support animals

You may also have the right to keep other animals in “no pet” housing if needed because of your disability. These are often called comfort, emotional support, or therapy animals. You should be prepared to explain how the animal helps your disability. Allowing you to keep these kinds of animals in “no pet” housing is a reasonable accommodation for your disability.

It is helpful to have a doctor or therapist “prescribe” this type of animal. Their note should explain what symptoms you are experiencing and how the animal helps you with those symptoms. A common example is a psychologist prescribing a cat for a person with depression to help her or him feel less isolated.

If your right to fair housing was violated and you are being evicted, you may be able to stop the eviction. Contact the Fair Housing Project at (855) 797-3247 for help staying in your home.