

ARBITRARY CHARACTERISTICS



If you are denied an opportunity to rent a home or apartment—or given false information about a rental—because of an arbitrary physical characteristic, you are a victim of illegal housing discrimination.

Housing providers cannot refuse to rent to you because you have tattoos, piercings, an uncommon hair style, or because they just don't like the way you look.

It is also illegal for landlords, maintenance workers, or security personnel to treat in-place residents or their guests unfavorably because of their appearance.

SIGNS & EXAMPLES OF RENTAL HOUSING DISCRIMINATION BASED ON ARBITRARY CHARACTERISTICS

- ❖ The landlord treats you well when you speak on the telephone, but changes the terms of the rental or refuses to rent to you after meeting you in person.
- ❖ The landlord says you might not fit into the community because of your appearance.
- ❖ Criminal background checks are only conducted on applicants with certain characteristics. (*It is legal to conduct criminal background checks on all applicants.*)
- ❖ Refusing to rent, requiring a co-signer, or demanding a higher security deposit for reasons without a legitimate business reason (i.e., bad credit, rental, or income history).

IF YOU SUSPECT ILLEGAL HOUSING DISCRIMINATION BASED ON ARBITRARY CHARACTERISTICS

Contact the **GBLA Fair Housing Law Project (FHLP)** at Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance.

Phone: 661-334-4679 or 855-746-7958 (toll free and California Relay Service)

Email: fairhousing@gbla.org

Website: www.GBLAfairhousing.org

- ❖ FHLP will interview you to find out what happened and advise you of your rights and options.
- ❖ In appropriate cases, FHLP will conduct an investigation to determine if there is evidence of illegal housing discrimination.
- ❖ If FHLP's investigation reveals evidence of housing discrimination on the basis of arbitrary characteristics, we can assist you in filing a complaint with the California Department of Fair Employment & Housing (DFEH), provide you with legal representation, attempt to resolve the matter through negotiation or landlord education, or take other appropriate steps.

IT IS UNLAWFUL FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS TO DENY HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES OR TREAT PEOPLE DIFFERENTLY BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, RELIGION, SEX, FAMILIAL STATUS, DISABILITY, ANCESTRY, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, SOURCE OF INCOME, AGE, OR ARBITRARY CHARACTERISTICS.