

# Don't Be Subject to Religious Discrimination

**"YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO HOUSING FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION"**

*Sex • Disability • Familial Status  
Race • Color • Religion  
National Origin or Ancestry • Military Status*

If you feel you've been discriminated against, make sure you take these steps:

- *Keep a record of the names, dates, addresses, phone numbers and other important information which can assist in the investigation of your complaint.*
- *Don't forget to be as specific as possible about the incident. Get the names and addresses of any witnesses to the incident whenever possible.*
- *Following the incident, you have one year to file an administrative complaint or two years to file a lawsuit.*



**Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc.**

1100 Mentor Ave.

Painesville, Ohio 44077

(440) 392-0147, Fax (440) 392-0148

Toll Free (866) 411-3472

Email: [info@fhrc.org](mailto:info@fhrc.org)

[www.FHRC.org](http://www.FHRC.org)

This brochure is intended for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If you need legal advice please contact your local Bar Association, Legal Aid Society or a private attorney.



**WHO IS**

**FAIR HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER**

The Fair Housing Resource Center Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that offers several housing programs to benefit residents of Northeast, Ohio. FHRC's mission is to promote equal housing opportunities for all persons and to advocate for fair housing and diversity in Lake County and the surrounding communities through education and involvement of the public, the governments, and the business community.



## FAIR HOUSING AND RELIGION



## WHAT IS RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION?

The Fair Housing Act ensures that housing providers cannot discriminate against renters or homebuyers based on their religion, whether they wear religious attire, practice religious rituals, or abstain from religion, including atheism or less common religious beliefs.

While housing providers are not obligated to adjust neutral policies to accommodate religious needs, they are prohibited from discriminating. Examples include refusing to rent or sell, charging different rates, or altering terms based on a person's religion.

Additionally, housing providers must not make discriminatory remarks, publish biased advertisements, or provide false information about property availability.

Individuals can include religious items or symbols in their units, provided this does not breach reasonable safety, sanitation rules, or laws.

Furthermore, if tenants can decorate their apartment doors, individuals should also be permitted to display religious items, such as a Jewish mezuzah or a Christian wreath or cross.



## EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

### Examples of possible fair housing violations:

- Refusing to rent to women who wear hijabs (religious headscarves) or Sikhs who wear turbans.
- Harassing tenants because of their religious practices or dress.
- Calling Muslims “terrorists” and telling them they aren’t welcome as tenants or neighbors.
- Allowing some tenants to put up Christmas lights, but telling others they cannot put up decorations for their non-Christian holidays.

- Telling tenant applicants that they won’t like a neighborhood because there isn’t a mosque, synagogue or church nearby.

- Prohibiting use of a community room for religious purposes, while allowing tenants to use them for secular gatherings, such as parties.

## USEFUL

### TIPS

**Combating religious discrimination requires a combination of awareness, education and proactive measures.**

**Know Your Rights:** Familiarize yourself with your rights regarding religious freedoms and discrimination. Understanding your legal protections can help you address and resolve issues more effectively.

**Stand Up Against Discrimination:** If you witness or experience religious discrimination, speak out against it. Support those affected and report incidents to appropriate authorities or organizations.

**Educate Yourself and Others:** Learn about various religions, beliefs, and practices to foster understanding and empathy. Share this knowledge with others to dispel myths and stereotypes.