

TITLE 42 - THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE
CHAPTER 45 - FAIR HOUSING
SUBCHAPTER I - GENERALLY

§ 3604. Discrimination in the sale or rental of housing and other prohibited practices

As made applicable by section 3603 of this title and except as exempted by sections 3603 (b) and 3607 of this title, it shall be unlawful—

- (a) To refuse to sell or rent after the making of a bona fide offer, or to refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny, a dwelling to any person because of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin.
- (b) To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith, because of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin.
- (c) To make, print, or publish, or cause to be made, printed, or published any notice, statement, or advertisement, with respect to the sale or rental of a dwelling that indicates any preference, limitation, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination.
- (d) To represent to any person because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin that any dwelling is not available for inspection, sale, or rental when such dwelling is in fact so available.
- (e) For profit, to induce or attempt to induce any person to sell or rent any dwelling by representations regarding the entry or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.
- (f)
 - (1) To discriminate in the sale or rental, or to otherwise make unavailable or deny, a dwelling to any buyer or renter because of a handicap of—
 - (A) that buyer or renter,¹
 - (B) a person residing in or intending to reside in that dwelling after it is so sold, rented, or made available; or
 - (C) any person associated with that buyer or renter.
 - (2) To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection with such dwelling, because of a handicap of—
 - (A) that person; or
 - (B) a person residing in or intending to reside in that dwelling after it is so sold, rented, or made available; or
 - (C) any person associated with that person.
 - (3) For purposes of this subsection, discrimination includes—
 - (A) a refusal to permit, at the expense of the handicapped person, reasonable modifications of existing premises occupied or to be occupied by such person if such modifications may be necessary to afford such person full enjoyment of the premises except that, in the case of a rental, the landlord may where it is reasonable to do so condition permission for a modification on the renter agreeing to restore the interior of the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, reasonable wear and tear excepted.²
 - (B) a refusal to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services, when such accommodations may be necessary to afford such person equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling; or

- (C) in connection with the design and construction of covered multifamily dwellings for first occupancy after the date that is 30 months after September 13, 1988, a failure to design and construct those dwellings in such a manner that—
- (i) the public use and common use portions of such dwellings are readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons;
 - (ii) all the doors designed to allow passage into and within all premises within such dwellings are sufficiently wide to allow passage by handicapped persons in wheelchairs; and
 - (iii) all premises within such dwellings contain the following features of adaptive design:
 - (I) an accessible route into and through the dwelling;
 - (II) light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats, and other environmental controls in accessible locations;
 - (III) reinforcements in bathroom walls to allow later installation of grab bars; and
 - (IV) usable kitchens and bathrooms such that an individual in a wheelchair can maneuver about the space.
- (4) Compliance with the appropriate requirements of the American National Standard for buildings and facilities providing accessibility and usability for physically handicapped people (commonly cited as “ANSI A117.1”) suffices to satisfy the requirements of paragraph (3)(C)(iii).
- (5) (A) If a State or unit of general local government has incorporated into its laws the requirements set forth in paragraph (3)(C), compliance with such laws shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of that paragraph.
- (B) A State or unit of general local government may review and approve newly constructed covered multifamily dwellings for the purpose of making determinations as to whether the design and construction requirements of paragraph (3)(C) are met.
- (C) The Secretary shall encourage, but may not require, States and units of local government to include in their existing procedures for the review and approval of newly constructed covered multifamily dwellings, determinations as to whether the design and construction of such dwellings are consistent with paragraph (3)(C), and shall provide technical assistance to States and units of local government and other persons to implement the requirements of paragraph (3)(C).
- (D) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to require the Secretary to review or approve the plans, designs or construction of all covered multifamily dwellings, to determine whether the design and construction of such dwellings are consistent with the requirements of paragraph 3(C).
- (6) (A) Nothing in paragraph (5) shall be construed to affect the authority and responsibility of the Secretary or a State or local public agency certified pursuant to section 3610 (f)(3) of this title to receive and process complaints or otherwise engage in enforcement activities under this subchapter.
- (B) Determinations by a State or a unit of general local government under paragraphs (5)(A) and (B) shall not be conclusive in enforcement proceedings under this subchapter.
- (7) As used in this subsection, the term “covered multifamily dwellings” means—
- (A) buildings consisting of 4 or more units if such buildings have one or more elevators; and
 - (B) ground floor units in other buildings consisting of 4 or more units.
- (8) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to invalidate or limit any law of a State or political subdivision of a State, or other jurisdiction in which this subchapter shall be effective, that requires dwellings to be designed and constructed in a manner that affords handicapped persons greater access than is required by this subchapter.

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 4, 2012 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscpri.html>).

(9) Nothing in this subsection requires that a dwelling be made available to an individual whose tenancy would constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals or whose tenancy would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others.

Footnotes

¹ So in original. The comma probably should be a semicolon.

² So in original. The period probably should be a semicolon.

(Pub. L. 90–284, title VIII, § 804, Apr. 11, 1968, 82 Stat. 83; Pub. L. 93–383, title VIII, § 808(b)(1), Aug. 22, 1974, 88 Stat. 729; Pub. L. 100–430, §§ 6(a)–(b)(2), (e), 15, Sept. 13, 1988, 102 Stat. 1620, 1622, 1623, 1636.)

Amendments

1988—Pub. L. 100–430, § 6(e), inserted “and other prohibited practices” in section catchline.

Subsecs. (a), (b). Pub. L. 100–430, § 6(b)(2), inserted “familial status,” after “sex.”

Subsecs. (c) to (e). Pub. L. 100–430, § 6(b)(1), inserted “handicap, familial status,” after “sex.”

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 100–430, § 6(a), added subsec. (f).

Subsec. (f)(3)(A). Pub. L. 100–430, § 15, which directed the substitution of “except that, in the case of a rental, the landlord may where it is reasonable to do so condition permission for a modification on the renter agreeing to restore the interior of the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, reasonable wear and tear excepted.” for the period at the end of subpar. (A) was executed by making the substitution for a semicolon as the probable intent of Congress because subpar. (A) ended with a semicolon, not a period.

1974—Pub. L. 93–383 inserted “, sex” after “religion” wherever appearing in cls. (a) to (e).

Effective Date of 1988 Amendment

Amendment by Pub. L. 100–430 effective on 180th day beginning after Sept. 13, 1988, see section 13(a) of Pub. L. 100–430, set out as a note under section 3601 of this title.