Florida Fair Housing Laws Overview

Legal Foundations

- Federal Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968)
- Florida Fair Housing Act (Sections 760.20–760.37, Florida Statutes)

Florida's Fair Housing Act is enforced by the **Florida Commission on Human Relations** (**FCHR**) and mirrors federal law, but may be enforced locally in some cities/counties with additional protections.

Protected Classes in Florida

It is illegal to discriminate based on:

- 1. Race
- 2. Color
- 3. National Origin
- 4. Religion
- 5. **Sex**
- 6. Disability (Physical or Mental)
- 7. Familial Status (e.g., families with children under 18, pregnant women)

Local Protections: Some counties (like Miami-Dade, Broward, and Orlando) may extend protections to:

- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Marital status
- Age
- Source of income (e.g., housing vouchers)

Prohibited Activities

It is illegal to engage in the following actions if done with discriminatory intent:

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Set different terms, conditions, or privileges (e.g., rent, deposits)
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny housing is available
- Engage in discriminatory advertising (e.g., "no children," "Christian only")

- Harass or intimidate individuals exercising fair housing rights
- Fail to accommodate disabilities (e.g., refusing to allow a service animal)

Reasonable Accommodations & Modifications

Landlords must:

- Allow **reasonable accommodations** in rules/policies (e.g., allowing a support animal in a no-pet property)
- Allow **reasonable modifications** to the unit at the tenant's expense (e.g., installing grab bars)

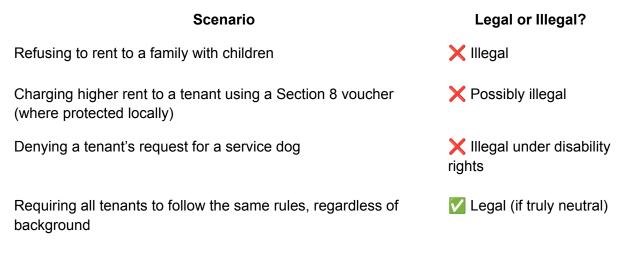
Enforcement & Complaints

- Florida Commission on Human Relations (FCHR) investigates state-level complaints.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) handles federal complaints.
- Complaints must be filed within 1 year of the alleged discriminatory act.

To File a Complaint:

- Online: https://fchr.myflorida.com/
- Or contact your local fair housing agency or HUD office.

Example Violations



Printable Fact Sheet for Leasing Agents:

Florida Fair Housing Laws – Quick Reference

Legal Authority:

- Florida Fair Housing Act §§ 760.20–760.37, Florida Statutes
- Federal Fair Housing Act Title VIII, Civil Rights Act of 1968

Protected Classes in Florida:

You may not discriminate in housing based on:

- ✔ Race
- ✔ Color
- ✔ National Origin
- ✓ Religion
- ✔ Sex
- ✓ Disability (Mental or Physical)
- ✓ Familial Status (children under 18, pregnant women)

Some local jurisdictions also protect:

- ✓ Sexual orientation
- ✔ Gender identity
- ✓ Source of income
- ✔ Marital status
- ✔ Age

Prohibited Discriminatory Practices:

- Refusing to rent, sell, or negotiate housing
- Setting different lease terms, prices, or availability
- Using discriminatory language in advertising
- Denying access to housing-related services
- Harassment or coercion related to fair housing rights
- Refusing reasonable accommodations for disabilities

Reasonable Accommodations:

Landlords **must allow**:

- Emotional support or service animals
- Accessible parking, communication aids, or policy modifications (e.g., accepting a rent payment date aligned with disability benefits)

Enforcement:

Florida Commission on Human Relations (FCHR)

- Website: https://fchr.myflorida.com
- **C** Phone: (850) 488-7082
- E File complaints within **1 year** of the incident

Fair Housing Checklist:

This must be present on every leasing agent's desk/workspace.

General Rental Practices

- □ Apply the **same rental criteria** to all applicants
- Use **neutral language** in advertising (no "Christian-only," "no kids," etc.)
- □ Avoid questions about personal traits (religion, race, sexual orientation, etc.)
- $\hfill\square$ Document the application process and all interactions

📝 During Tenancy

- □ Respond equally and promptly to maintenance requests
- □ Permit **reasonable accommodations** for tenants with disabilities
- \square Do not impose additional fees for service or support animals
- \Box Avoid retaliation against tenants asserting their rights

Reasonable Accommodation Checklist

- □ Request was made (written or verbal)
- □ It relates to a **disability**
- $\hfill\square$ Request is **reasonable** and doesn't pose undue burden
- $\hfill\square$ Interactive dialogue was offered
- □ Response was provided promptly

📝 Lease & Policy Review

- $\hfill\square$ Lease includes a non-discrimination clause
- \square No blanket pet restrictions that violate disability protections
- □ Policies are **uniformly enforced**
- $\hfill\square$ Eviction and nonrenewal decisions are documented and non-discriminatory