

## What is Race/Color Housing Discrimination?

Race and color are protected characteristics under federal, state, and local fair housing laws. You are protected from race and color discrimination in all aspects of housing, including when renting, buying, or selling a home, or while residing in your home. That means that you cannot be treated differently by landlords, sellers, agents, banks, management companies, operators of facilities, co-op boards, or other housing providers because of your race or skin color. This includes your actual race or perceived race, even when it is not stated or obvious. You are also protected if you identify as multiracial, or if you are associated with (such as being married to) a person of a certain race or color.

## What are some examples of race/color housing discrimination?

- Lying to a Black prospective renter about apartment availability
- Quoting higher rents to an Asian prospective renter
- Attempting to maintain a building or neighborhood's "character" by only sharing information about available homes with people of a certain race
- Warning a white couple that they might be uncomfortable raising their children in a neighborhood with predominantly residents of color
- Using a negative description of schools to steer certain potential buyers away from predominantly Black and brown neighborhoods

## How are people and communities harmed by race/color discrimination?

Having housing options restricted by one's race or color can be a painful, humiliating, and costly experience. Separating communities by race or color results in vast disparities in education and employment opportunities, nutrition and medical care, police interactions, and the ability to accumulate generational wealth.

## What if the discrimination results from seemingly neutral policies?

Some policies that appear race-neutral, like zoning regulations or residential preferences, are discriminatory if they result in a disproportionate impact on people of a certain race.

### Race vs. Color

While race and color discrimination often are found together, they are different. Race discrimination involves treating someone differently because they are of a particular race or have personal characteristics (like hair texture or facial features) associated with a certain race. Color discrimination is based on a person's skin color or complexion.

## Where can I learn more?

If you think you are experiencing any form of housing discrimination, contact the FHJC. We will help sort out the facts and provide you with information about your rights and options under fair housing laws. You can also contact us – anonymously if you prefer – if you know about housing discrimination that is happening to others. Our counseling and investigative services are provided for free, regardless of income.