Immigration Protections Against Housing Discrimination

EOI TRAINING SERIES

Fair Housing for Young Adults was made possible with funding from an Education and Outreach Initiative (EOI) grant from the Fair Housing Initiative Program (FHIP) of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
OVERVIEW OF TOPICS FOR THIS SESSION

RESPONDING TO LANDLORD INQUIRIES ABOUT IMMIGRATION STATUS

FACTORYING IN LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

THREATS TO REPORT IMMIGRATION STATUS
Introduction

National Origin are protected characteristics under federal, state, and local fair housing laws.

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 ancestry, ethnicity, birthplace, culture or language.
WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?
You cannot be denied housing opportunities because you or your family are from another country, because you have a name or accent associated with a national origin group, because you participate in certain customs associated with a national origin group, or because you are married to or associate with someone of a certain national origin.
RESPONDING TO LANDLORD INQUIRIES ABOUT IMMIGRATION STATUS
Responding to Landlord Inquiries about Immigration Status

Landlords and Real Estate Agents CANNOT ask you questions about your immigration status. However...

Landlords are allowed to request documentation and conduct inquiries to determine whether a potential renter meets the criteria for rental, so long as this procedure is applied to all potential renters.

Landlords can also ask for identity documents and institute credit checks to ensure ability to pay rent. A person’s ability to pay rent or fitness as a tenant is not necessarily connected to their immigration status.

Procedures to screen tenants for citizenship and immigration status may violate the FHA on national origin discrimination.
"I DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH/ENGLISH IS NOT MY FIRST LANGUAGE..."
A housing provider may not impose less favorable terms or conditions on a group of residents of a certain national origin by taking advantage of their limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.
"MY LANDLORD IS THREATENING TO REPORT MY IMMIGRATION STATUS..."
It is illegal to coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere with a person’s exercise or enjoyment of rights granted or protected by the FHA.

This includes threats to report a person to ICE if they report housing discrimination.
Discussion