

NATIONAL ORIGIN & IMMIGRATION STATUS HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

PROJECT SENTINEL
A NONPROFIT FAIR HOUSING AGENCY



WHAT IS NATIONAL ORIGIN DISCRIMINATION?

It is illegal for a landlord to treat you differently because of your birthplace, ethnicity, culture, or ancestry. This includes refusing to rent an available unit, make necessary repairs to the unit, or harassing you because of your perceived national origin.

Discrimination based on citizenship/immigration status, race, color, and primary language are characteristics that a landlord might use to discriminate because of your national origin.

In California, immigration status and primary language are protected classes. It is illegal for your landlord to treat you differently because your primary language is not English.



SEARCHING/APPLYING FOR HOUSING?

Protect yourself when searching for a place to rent: watch out for the following signs of national origin discrimination:

- You are asked for your immigration status
- The landlord refuses to allow you to use an interpreter
- You are told there are no available units, but the ad is still posted
- The rent or deposit quoted to you is higher than advertised
- The landlord refuses to rent to you because you do not speak English well.
- The landlord tells you it is illegal for him/her to rent to undocumented people.
- You are otherwise unfairly treated because of your immigration status, race or inability to speak English.

What CAN the landlord ask for?

The landlord may ask for documentation to verify your identity. Generally you are not obligated to provide a social security number. Alternative forms of identification include:

- i.ITIN: An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)
- ii.California driver's license: You can also apply for a driver's license in the state of California regardless of immigration status.
- iii.Foreign passports.
- iv. Consular ID cards.





RENTING?

Possible signs of national origin discrimination may include:

- Harassment from neighbors or your landlord because of your race or immigration status.
- Eviction or deportation threats from your landlord because you asked for repairs.
- You notice your landlord shows preferential treatment towards tenants of a certain race when responding to maintenance requests.
- You receive complaints from your neighbors/landlord regarding smells caused by cooking food associated with your national origin such as curries, cumin, ginger etc.

Housing discrimination occurs when anyone involved with providing housing- including property managers, owners and mobile home parks- treats home seekers/ renters differently because of a protected category:

Federal protected categories include:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion
- Sex/gender
- Disability
- Familial Status

California protected classes include:

- Primary language
- Citizenship or immigration status
- Sexual Orientation
- Source of income
- Age
- Gender Identity and expression
- Marital status

Or any other arbitrary characteristic that is unrelated to a person's ability to be a good tenant.

Housing discrimination is illegal. Call Project Sentinel at (888)-324-7468, TTY 711, for help.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM DISCRIMINATION?

If you notice any of the above signs, it is important to:

1. Document everything you see: Take notes on any application requirements, and the name and contact information of anyone you speak to. Keep copies of any rental ads, voicemails or emails.
2. Ensure you fully understand the terms of your lease before signing. Unless the property receives federal funding, the landlord has no obligation to provide an interpreter but you have the right to bring your own.

DID YOU KNOW?

If the contract is negotiated in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, or Korean without an interpreter, the landlord must provide the contract in the same language.

RETALIATION IS ILLEGAL- CONTACT PROJECT SENTINEL!

It is illegal for your landlord to retaliate against you for reaching out to a fair housing agency like Project Sentinel for help. Our services are completely free and our Fair Housing Center is not affiliated with any government agencies or entities. Project Sentinel does not discriminate based on income, race, or immigration status. Do not hesitate to call and reach out for help.

OUR SERVICE AREA

Project Sentinel is able to provide assistance over the phone or at one of our many regional offices to individuals who experience housing discrimination in the following geographic areas:

Santa Clara County
San Mateo County
Stanislaus County
Sacramento County
City of West Sacramento
City of Fremont
City of Merced

CONTACT

Contact Project Sentinel toll free:
(888)-324-7468

www.housing.org
info@housing.org

To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities:

Email: scottrell@housing.org

TTY:7-1-1

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