

Fair Housing Protections

The Process of Filing a Fair Housing Complaint



Fair Housing is a right every person has when renting or owning a place to live. A Fair Housing violation occurs when a person is discriminated against in any housing-related matter because of their **race, color, national origin, religion, disability, familial status, or gender**.

If You Believe You've Experienced Housing Discrimination:

Document everything!

- Keep a file with all communication and incidents.
- Contact your landlord only through text or email.
- If you must call, notify your landlord that you are recording the call before you start recording.
- Save dates, screenshots, letters, and notes describing what happened.

The Filing Process:

You can file a complaint through a local Center for Fair Housing or directly through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Option 1:

Contact your Center for Fair Housing

- Central Alabama Fair Housing Center (*Montgomery*)
- South Alabama Center for Fair Housing (*Mobile*)
- Fair Housing Center of Northern Alabama (*Birmingham*)

You will give them all the information of what happened and any evidence you have.

The Center will file the complaint with HUD online and represent you in the complaint.

Option 2:

File directly with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Online: <https://www.hud.gov/reporhousingdiscrimination>

Phone: 1-800-669-9777

You will need:

- Why you were discriminated against (race, color, sex)
- The name and address of who discriminated against you
- Where the discrimination occurred
- Dates of discrimination
- A short description of what occurred with dates
- Your contact information

The Litigation Process:

1. After filing a Complaint with HUD

- HUD will conduct an investigation at no cost to you.
- HUD will attempt conciliation – bring you and the landlord together for an agreement.
- If there is no settlement, then you or the landlord can elect to be heard in Federal Court.
- If no one elects that, then it goes before an HUD Administrative Judge.

2. You can also sue on your own for violations of the Fair Housing Act, in state or federal court.

- You have 2 years from the date of discrimination to file a claim.
- You do NOT have to file a HUD complaint first, and you can file a HUD complaint at the same time as your own private lawsuit.



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