



Fair Housing in Port Arthur, Texas

Expanding Opportunities. Expanding Choice.

- Do you know your rights under the [Fair Housing Act \(HUD.gov\)](#)?
- Do you believe someone has discriminated against you under the Fair Housing Act?
- If a consumer, do you know how to file a Fair Housing complaint?
- If a housing professional, do you know how to ensure compliance with the Fair Housing Act?

The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination.

You cannot be denied access to a home solely on the basis of **color, race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or your familial status (children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18)**.

City of Port Arthur's Commitment

The City of Port Arthur, Texas is fully committed to ensuring that our programs follow the requirements of the Fair Housing Act and operate to further fair housing. The City of Port Arthur strives to promote sound housing policies and the leveraging of state and local resources. The effort is made to prevent discrimination and ensure the stability and continuity of services through a fair, nondiscriminatory and open process. The City of Port Arthur's awardees are strongly encouraged to attend fair housing training.

Fair Housing Basics

The general public, including buyers/renters, elected officials, housing developers, mortgage brokers and leasing/loaning agents, will be able to benefit from a greater understanding of the daily impact of the Federal and Texas Fair Housing Acts. We have gathered several fair housing resources on this page to help answer many of your fair housing questions.

Developers, Architects, and Engineers

One of the most costly violations of the Fair Housing Act is related to the development of properties that are not accessible, as required under the Act. Developers, architects, and engineers of multifamily properties must understand their obligations, not only related to choice and leasing practices, but also construction design requirements that are necessary to comply with the Fair Housing Act. One of the most costly violations of the Fair Housing Act is related to the development of properties that are not accessible, as required under the Act.

Lenders and Real Estate Professionals

Lenders, real estate brokers and agents, and management companies and leasing agents, must be mindful of how Fair Housing laws impact their marketing, lending, and leasing decisions.

Violations

Suspected Fair Housing Act violations can be reported to the [Civil Rights Division of the Texas Workforce Commission \(www.twc.state.tx.us\)](#) or the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD.gov\)](#).



Fair Housing Basics

Federal and State Legislation

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 ([Fair Housing Act - HUD.gov](#)), as amended, covers housing-related activities regardless of whether federal funds are used in the sale, rental, or construction of housing, with some limited exceptions.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap (disability), and familial status (children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has the responsibility to administer and enforce the provisions of the Fair Housing Act.

Texas also has its own [Texas Fair Housing Act \(www.twc.state.tx.us\)](#), which closely mirrors the Federal Fair Housing Act. The Civil Rights Division of the Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division (TWCCRD) enforces the Texas Fair Housing Act. Complainants received by TWCCRD are investigated by TWCCRD and coordinated with HUD.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

In addition to the Fair Housing Act, all entities that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), or administer HUD-funded programs, have a duty to [Affirmatively Further Fair Housing \(AFFH - HUD.gov\)](#). HUD defines AFFH as:

- Conducting an analysis to identify impediments to fair housing choice (the AI) within the jurisdiction;
- Taking appropriate actions to overcome the effects of any impediments identified through the analysis; and
- Maintaining records reflecting the analysis and actions taken in this regard.

As part of the City of Port Arthur's AFFH efforts, all awardees must have [affirmative marketing procedures \(HUD.gov\)](#) to attract potential consumers or residents regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status. Awardees must also maintain waiting lists in a non-discriminatory manner.

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

Overview of Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

The City of Port Arthur, Texas, in its Consolidated Plan, certifies to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that it will affirmatively further fair housing. The City of Port Arthur, as a direct recipient of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development funding, periodically prepares an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) for submission to HUD. The topics that are analyzed are demographic data, policies, and practices, shape circumstances that influence the abilities of low-income households to secure decent, safe, and affordable housing. The AI may examine actions, omissions, or decisions based on race, color, religion, gender, disability, familial status, or national origin that may directly or indirectly restrict fair housing choices.

The City of Port Arthur completed the [Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in 2011](#). The Analysis of Impediment covers the Port Arthur Metropolitan Statistical Area of the Golden Triangle Region in the State of Texas and can help communities understand some of the impediments to fair housing choice that may be found in their jurisdictions.

Fair Housing Resources

The [National Fair Housing Alliance \(NFHA - \[www.nationalfairhousing.org\]\(http://www.nationalfairhousing.org\)\)](#) works to eliminate housing discrimination and to ensure equal housing opportunity for all people through leadership, education, outreach, membership services, public policy initiatives, advocacy, and enforcement.

[FairHousingResources.com](#) provides a one-stop-shop for Fair Housing laws, news, case studies, and more.

Questions about fair housing rights can be directed to either of the following:

- U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development – (713) 718-3199
- [Austin Tenants' Council \(\[www.housing-rights.org\]\(http://www.housing-rights.org\)\)](#)
- Greater Houston Fair Housing Center: (713) 641-3247
- [San Antonio Fair Housing Council \(\[www.myfairhousing.org/\]\(http://www.myfairhousing.org/\)\)](#)
- [North Texas Fair Housing \(\[www.northtexasfairhousing.org\]\(http://www.northtexasfairhousing.org\)\)](#)

Fair Housing Act complaints or suspected violations can be submitted to:

[Civil Rights Division of the Texas Workforce Commission](#)
(http://www.twc.state.tx.us/crd/housing_fact.html)

1117 Trinity Street, Rm. 144-T
Austin, Texas 78701
Phone: 512-463-2642
TTY: 512-371-7473

All complaints that are suspected to violate the state and federal Fair Housing Acts will be automatically co-filed with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

[U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD.gov\)](#)

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Room 5204
451 Seventh St. SW
Washington, DC 20410-2000
Toll Free: 1-800-669-9777

The [HUD Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Office for Region 6 \(HUD.gov\)](#), which serves Texas, also enforces fair housing laws; conducts training, outreach, and compliance monitoring; and works with state and local agencies to administer fair housing programs. They can be reached as follows:

Fort Worth Regional Office of FHEO
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
801 Cherry Street, Unit #45, Suite 2500
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
Phone: 817-978-5900
Toll Free: 1-800-669-9777
TTY: 817-978-5595

Houston Office of FHEO -- www.hud.gov
1301 Fannin Street, Suite 2200
Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: 713-718-3299

TTY: 713-718-3299

The U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division brings suits on behalf of individuals based on referrals from HUD. They can be reached as follows:

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530
Phone: 202-514-4713
TTY: 202-305-1882
Fax: 202-514-1116
Tip Line: 1-800-896-7743
Email: fairhousing@usdoj.gov

Texas General Land Office
1700 N. Congress Ave. Austin, TX 78701-1495
1-800-998-44466
1-612-463-6001
www.glo.texas.gov/

The Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs
221 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2410
512 475-3800
800 525-0657
www.tdhca.state.tx.us

Other Fair Housing Resources

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/index.cfm
- HUD Fair Housing Assistance Providers www.hud.gov/groups/fairhousing.cfm
- Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division www.twc.state.tx.us/customers/jsemp/jsempsubcrd.html
- National Fair Housing Advocate www.fairhousing.com
- Austin Tenants' Council www.housing-rights.org/
- International Code Council www.iccsafe.org

Important Organizations

There are several fair housing organizations throughout Texas that advocate for fair housing rights, assist with filing a fair housing complaint, and help complainants find legal advice, including:

- [Austin Tenants' Council \(www.housing-rights.org\)](http://www.housing-rights.org)
- Greater Houston Fair Housing Center: (713) 641-3247
- [San Antonio Fair Housing Council \(www.myfairhousing.org/\)](http://www.myfairhousing.org/)
- [North Texas Fair Housing \(www.northtexasfairhousing.org\)](http://www.northtexasfairhousing.org)

Zoning and Land Use

Contract Administrators that are governmental entities and have the ability to make zoning, land use decisions, and land use policies, should be mindful of how those decisions may impact fair housing choice. Such decisions have the potential to impact protected classes from discrimination.

Governmental entities may also make reasonable accommodations in land use and zoning policies. What constitutes a reasonable accommodation is on a case-by-case determination. Not all requests to alter rules or policies are reasonable,

particularly if they impose an undue financial or administrative burden on a local government, or if it would create a fundamental alteration in a local government's land use and zoning scheme.