



# Fair Housing

## National Origin / Ancestry

### Housing Discrimination Based on National Origin Is Illegal

Equal housing laws prohibit those who sell or rent housing from discriminating based upon race, color, national origin or family ancestry. Landlords must follow the same criteria regarding income, credit, deposits or other standards for all applicants with no regard for their race, skin color, national origin or ancestry. They also cannot set different policies or rules for tenants based on these characteristics.



#### Defining 'National Origin'

National origin is defined by a person's birthplace, language, customs or family heritage. People cannot be denied housing or face different standards based on their name, accent, appearance or participation in customs associated with any nationality.

A landlord also cannot discriminate against people who do not speak English. However, private (non-government) landlords have no legal requirement to provide translation for any tenant or applicant.

#### About Social Security Numbers

Using a Social Security number for a background check of an applicant is considered a standard rental practice as long as the same request applies to all perspective tenants. If documentation is sought only from applicants who have an accent or look "foreign," that practice is illegal discrimination.

**If you suspect housing discrimination, call:**

#### Housing Opportunities Made Equal

2400 Reading Road, Suite 118  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

**513-721-4663**

[www.homecincy.org](http://www.homecincy.org)



#### Suspect discrimination when ...

- You hear one story about the house or apartment on the phone and another in person.
- You have been told that the housing is no longer available, but the "For Rent" sign is still up.
- Someone takes your application and promises to call you back, but you never hear from them.
- You are not allowed to put in an application or leave a deposit.
- The manager tells you that you must live in a certain area of the apartment complex where "others like you" live.
- The manager charges you a higher deposit or higher rent than other tenants.
- The manager or owner tries to convince you not to rent.

HOME is a private, non-profit fair housing agency serving all of the Greater Cincinnati area. If you believe that you may have experienced discrimination, we can help you by:

- Recording the facts about what happened to you
- Investigating and helping to resolve the complaint
- Offering advice and counsel about enforcement options

