

## THE DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

THE MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING IS TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA FROM UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, AND FROM THE PERPETRATION OF ACTS OF HATE VIOLENCE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING.



# SEXUAL HARASSMENT FAIR HOUSING FACT SHEET

## CALIFORNIA FAIR HOUSING LAWS PROTECT YOU FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, you are entitled to live in an environment free of sexual harassment. A housing provider may not subject you to sexual harassment or retaliate against you for refusing sexual advances or for objecting to other forms of sexual harassment.

California fair housing laws also prohibit housing providers from harassing you or otherwise discriminating against you because of your race, color, religion, sex/gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin (including primary language), ancestry, familial status (households with children under age 18), source of income, disability (mental and physical, including HIV and AIDS), medical condition (cancer/genetic characteristics), or age. The law also covers situations where you are perceived to have these characteristics, or you associate with a person who has, or is believed to have, these characteristics.

## BEHAVIORS THAT MAY BE SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

- ① Unwanted sexual advances or propositions
- ② Offering housing rights or privileges in exchange for sexual favors
- ③ Leering; making offensive gestures; or displaying offensive or suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters

- ④ Comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes of a sexual nature; graphic statements about an individual's body; suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations
- ⑤ Threatening or taking adverse action (such as eviction) in retaliation for a negative response to sexual advances
- ⑥ Physical touching or assault, as well as impeding or blocking movements

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY HARASSED, YOU CAN FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING (DFEH) BY TAKING THE FOLLOWING STEPS WITHIN ONE YEAR OF THE INCIDENT:

- 1 Contact DFEH by using the information on the front of this flyer
- 2 Be prepared to present specific facts about the alleged discrimination or harassment
- 3 Keep any records and documents you have about the incident(s), such as rent receipts, applications, and other potential proof of discrimination

If your complaint is accepted, DFEH will conduct an impartial investigation. We represent the State of California. DFEH will, if possible, try to assist both parties to resolve the complaint.

If a voluntary settlement cannot be reached, and there is sufficient evidence to establish a violation of the law, DFEH will litigate the case in civil court. If a court decides in favor of the complaining party, remedies may include making available previously denied housing, compensation for losses and emotional distress, training and policy changes to prevent future discrimination, and other actions to eliminate the effects of discrimination.

You have the right to file a lawsuit on your own behalf in a California court within two years of the alleged discriminatory act. It is not necessary to file a complaint with DFEH prior to the filing of a lawsuit. The time that a complaint is pending with DFEH will not count when computing the two-year period.

## POTENTIAL CIVIL REMEDIES

- ① Making available previously denied housing
- ② Compensation for losses and emotional distress
- ③ Training and policy changes to prevent future discrimination
- ④ Other actions to eliminate the effects of discrimination, such as penalties and fines

## OTHER AGENCIES CAN HELP

- 1 The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) enforces federal laws that prohibit discrimination in housing. It also monitors subsidized housing programs. For further information, call (800) 347-3739, or visit the website at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov).
- 2 The State of California Department of Consumer Affairs can help with questions or complaints regarding landlord/tenant relationships, including repair issues, safety violations, and Health and Safety Code violations. For further information, call (800) 952-5210, or visit the website at [www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov).
- 3 The Mobile Home Ombudsman at the Department of Housing and Community Development can help with questions or complaints pertaining to mobile homes, including health and safety issues, maintenance issues, and warranty issues. For further information, call (800) 952-5275, or visit the website at [www.hcd.ca.gov](http://www.hcd.ca.gov).

If you have a disability that prevents you from submitting a written intake form on-line, by mail, or email, DFEH can assist you by scribing your intake by phone or, for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or have speech disabilities, through the California Relay Service (711), or call us through your VRS at (800) 884-1684 (voice).

To schedule an appointment, contact the Communication Center at (800) 884-1684 (voice or via relay operator 711) or (800) 700-2320 (TTY) or by email at [contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov](mailto:contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov).

DFEH is committed to providing access to our materials in an alternative format as a reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities when requested.

Contact DFEH at (800) 884-1684 (voice or via relay operator 711), TTY (800) 700-2320, or [contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov](mailto:contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov) to discuss your preferred format to access our materials or webpages.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Department of Fair Employment and Housing

Toll Free: (800) 884-1684  
TTY: (800) 700-2320  
Online: [www.dfeh.ca.gov](http://www.dfeh.ca.gov)

Also find us on:

