

## Does Every Request for an Accommodation Have to be Granted ?

A landlord or other housing provider can deny a request for an accommodation if the accommodation would create an unreasonable burden on the housing provider. Examples of unreasonable burdens include not getting paid rent or irreparable damages to a housing unit.

## Is a Housing Provider Required to Rent or Sell to Someone Who is Disabled?

A landlord or other housing provider can deny housing to a person with mental disability if, even with a reasonable accommodation, that person cannot meet the requirements of the tenancy.

The law also states that a person can be denied housing if that person's tenancy would be a direct threat to the health or safety of other tenants or would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others. Such a denial, however, must be based on actual, documented information of threats to health or safety. If no such documentation exists and a person is denied housing because of fears or stereotypes about people with mental disabilities, the housing provider is engaging in illegal behavior and is breaking the fair housing laws.

## If You Need More Information About Housing Discrimination

*Call the Connecticut Fair Housing Center immediately!!!*



The Connecticut Fair Housing Center is a private, non-profit fair housing center serving all of Connecticut. Because Connecticut's low-income residents are particularly affected by discriminatory housing practices, the Center devotes its scarce resources principally to assisting Connecticut's low-income residents. If you believe you have been the victim of housing discrimination we will:

- **Take down information about what happened;**
- **Investigate any complaint we receive;**
- **Offer advice and counseling about the fair housing laws;**
- **Provide free legal representation to the victims of housing discrimination.**

If you have a mental disability and you think you may have experienced illegal housing discrimination, or if you have questions, contact the Connecticut Fair Housing Center:

The Connecticut Fair Housing Center  
221 Main Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 247-4400  
(860) 247-4236 (fax)  
or  
171 Orange Street  
New Haven, CT 06510  
(203) 772-3247  
(203) 562-7107 (fax)

E-mail: [info@ctfairhousing.org](mailto:info@ctfairhousing.org)

# Fair Housing for Individuals with Mental Disabilities

The Connecticut  
Fair Housing Center

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*All Neighborhoods  
Welcoming All People*



## CT FAIR HOUSING CENTER

### Fair Housing for Individuals with Mental Disabilities

Both the federal and Connecticut law prohibit discrimination in housing because of a handicap or disability. Disabilities can include both physical and mental impairments.

A mental disability includes any mental or psychological disorder which impairs any major life activity<sup>1</sup>.

Mental disorders include:

- Developmental disabilities;
- Dental or emotional illness such as depression or schizophrenia;
- Autism;
- Alzheimer's disease;
- Tourette's syndrome;
- Disabilities resulting from aging or mental retardation;

The law also protects any individual who is regarded as having a mental disability or who has a history of such a disability.

However, the law does not protect current users of illegal drugs.

*The purpose of this brochure is to raise awareness among community members, tenants, homeowners, landlords, and other housing providers about the fair housing rights of individuals with mental disabilities.*

*Although this brochure only deals with the fair housing rights of individuals with mental disabilities, the Connecticut Fair Housing Center also publishes information about the rights of individuals with other disabilities. Please contact our office for further information.*

<sup>1</sup>Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual task, learning, working, seeing, and hearing.

### What the Law Requires

Landlords, housing providers, and other individuals cannot discriminate against someone searching for or living in housing either because they believe the person is mentally disabled or because in fact the person is mentally disabled.

### Example of Illegal Activity

Landlord and other housing providers cannot:

- Refuse to rent or sell to a person who has a mental disability;
- Refuse to rent or sell to a person because someone associated with him or her has a mental disability;
- Ask a person with mental disability if he or she is disabled;
- Ask for more information than would be asked of any other potential tenant;
- Ask about medical treatment or whether the person is able to live independently.

Finally, landlords and other housing providers cannot impose different terms or conditions because of an individual's mental disability.



### Are All Housing Providers Covered Under these Laws ?

No. In Connecticut landlords renting owner-occupied two family houses and owner-occupied rooming houses are exempt from this law. However, there may be other laws which apply to a particular landlord, so always call the Connecticut Fair Housing Center if you have a question about this.

### Reasonable Accommodations

Every housing provider who is not exempt from the law must make reasonable accommodations to a person's disability. Reasonable accommodations are changes in rules, policies or practices so that the disabled person can live in or use a housing unit. Some examples of reasonable accommodations include:

- Changing a "no pets" policy for people who need companion animals;
- Giving notices to a personal care attendant as well as the tenant, if the tenant requests this;
- Giving personal care attendants access to laundry or other facilities that the disabled person cannot get to.

These are just a few examples of reasonable accommodations. There are many others.

If a tenant, home buyer, or other home seeker needs a reasonable accommodation, he or she may request it from the housing provider at any time. In addition, he or she must provide information from a medical professional who documents the effects of the disability and why the accommodation is needed.