

I participate in the Section 8 Program. What are my rights?

Fair housing laws protect you from discrimination by landlords, property managers, Housing Authorities, and others involved in rentals. You are protected if you participate in the Housing Choice Voucher program or if you're a tenant who lives in a unit that receives Section 8 rental subsidies.

The fair housing laws also make it illegal to discriminate in housing based on race, national origin, sex, disability, parental status, and other protected classes.

Does your rental property receive Section 8 rental subsidies? Find out online at www.hud.gov/apps/section8.

How can I protect my rights?

- Decide if you want to rent the property before you disclose your Section 8 status. Start with questions about the rental – don't immediately ask, "Do you take Section 8?"
- Take your voucher with you when you shop for a rental. The "TTP" on the voucher verifies your share of the rent and can be used to calculate the income-to-rent ratio.
- Do not move into a property unless it has been inspected and approved by the Housing Authority.
- Save a log of your property search. Keep copies of ads you responded to, records of who you speak to, and any information you were able to get about the rental.

Is the Section 8 protection available at all rental properties in Washington state?

No. Only housing properties located inside the city limits of Seattle, Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, or in unincorporated parts of King County are covered. Other housing in Washington state does not include Section 8 protection -- landlords and managers in other parts of the state can refuse to accept Section 8 vouchers.

How do I know if someone is discriminating against me?

Call a civil rights agency if landlords or property managers:

- Claim they don't offer one year leases.
- Claim they accept only month-to-month tenancies.
- Refuse to consider you because you make less than three times the full rent.
- Refuse to allow a Section 8 inspection of the rental.
- Say they won't sign a Section 8 lease.
- Charge you more rent than they charge other tenants for the same type of rental. Require you to have a job to qualify.
- Refuse to accept your security deposit.
- Want cash for the security deposit.
- Require you to agree to side payments.



Does a landlord have to rent to me because I'm on Section 8?

No. You must still apply and show you can pay your share of the rent, be a good neighbor, and take care of the property. But a landlord cannot impose extra requirements just to keep out Section 8 applicants.



A landlord or manager may legally turn you down because of:

- Bad credit history.
- Criminal convictions.
- Eviction history.
- Negative rental references.
- Inability to pay the monthly rent, the security deposit, or required fees.
- The Housing Authority refuses to approve the property because it is not affordable or fails to meet minimum housing quality standards.

As a tenant, you are expected to follow the lease and program requirements, to pay rent on time, and to maintain the rental in good condition.

The landlord or manager is expected to provide services according to the lease and to maintain the rental in a decent, safe and sanitary manner.

What should I do if housing discrimination happens to me?

Call a civil rights agency right away. Remember to document your housing situation. For more information about your fair housing rights, contact:

- **Seattle Office for Civil Rights**
206-684-4500, TTY Relay: 711
www.seattle.gov/civilrights
- **King County Office of Civil Rights**
civil-rights.OCR@kingcounty.gov
206-263-2446, TTY Relay: 711
www.kingcounty.gov/civilrights
- **City of Bellevue Code Compliance**
codecompliance@bellevuewa.gov
425-452-4570, TTY Relay: 711
www.bellevuewa.gov/reportproblem.htm
- **City of Kirkland Code Compliance**
enf-planning@kirklandwa.gov
425-587-3225, TTY Relay: 711
www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/planning/code_enforcement.htm
- **City of Redmond Code Compliance**
codeenforcement@redmond.gov
425-556-2474, TTY Relay: 711
www.redmond.gov/residents/codeenforcement

You are protected from housing discrimination if you participate in any Section 8 Program (including Housing Choice Vouchers).

Landlords and property managers in Seattle, Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, and unincorporated King County cannot discriminate against you just because you are in a Section 8 program.

This brochure outlines your fair housing protections.

Alternate formats available from King County OCR, 206-263-2446.



Feb. 2014

Your Housing Rights and Section 8 Programs

