

**Fair Housing Presentation
City of Lewisville
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Who We Are

- ▶ **Founded in 2010.**
- ▶ **A private, non-profit fair housing organization.**
- ▶ **Services:**
 - ▶ **Discrimination Complaint Investigation**
 - ▶ **Landlord/Tenant Counseling**
 - ▶ **Community Education and Training**
- ▶ **Area Served**
 - ▶ **Collin, Dallas, Delta, Denton, Ellis, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise Counties**

Who is Protected by the Fair Housing Laws?

Fair Housing Act (FHA)

- ▶ **Race**
- ▶ **Color**
- ▶ **Religion**
- ▶ **National Origin**
- ▶ **Sex: Gender or Sexual Harassment (1974)**
- ▶ **Familial Status (1988)**
- ▶ **Disability: Physical and/or Mental (1988)**

Discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited in the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth. Fort Worth's local ordinances also protect people from discrimination based on gender identity and expression.

What is Unlawful Under the Fair Housing Laws?

- ▶ **Refusal to Rent, Sell or Lease a Dwelling**
- ▶ **Lying about the Availability of a Dwelling**

- ▶ **Differential Treatment**

- ▶ - Terms
- ▶ - Treatment

Property owners should have uniform policies and apply them uniformly!

(exception: reasonable accommodations & modifications)

- ▶ **Statement of Preference**

- ▶ Verbal Statements
- ▶ Advertisements

Persons with Disabilities - Definition

- 1) *A physical or mental impairment*
- 2) *which substantially limits*
- 3) *one or more major life activities*

does not include current, illegal use of or addiction to a controlled substance, but does include someone in recovery.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

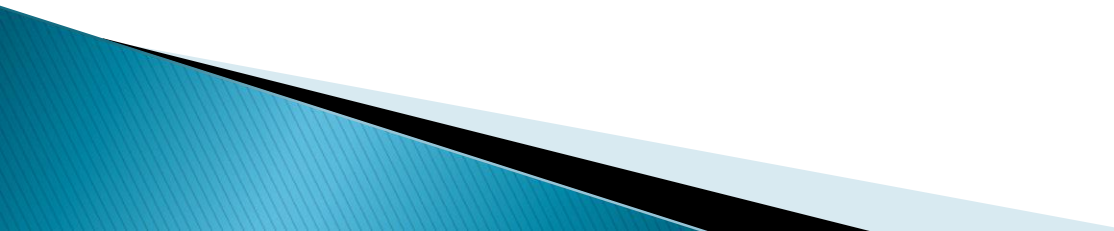
The Fair Housing Act makes it unlawful for any person to refuse “to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, and services, when such accommodations may be necessary to afford...person(s) [with disabilities] equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.”

42 U.S.C. Section 3604(f)(3)(B)

24 C.F.R. Section 100.204



Examples: Reasonable Accommodation

- Granting an exception to a No-Pet Rule for a tenant who needs a companion animal.
 - Assigning a parking space closer to a tenant's unit.
 - Granting a transfer to a 1st floor unit.
 - Changing the rent due date.
 - Allowing a caregiver to reside in tenant's unit.
 - Terminating a lease early without fees or penalties.
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What is a reasonable modification?

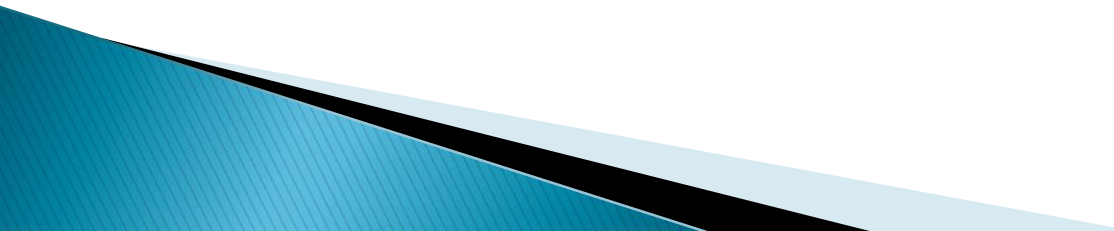
The Fair Housing Act requires that housing providers allow residents to make reasonable structural modifications to units and public/common areas in a dwelling when those modifications may be necessary for a person with a disability to have full enjoyment of a dwelling.

42 U.S.C. Section 3604(f)(3)(B)

24 C.F.R. Section 100.203

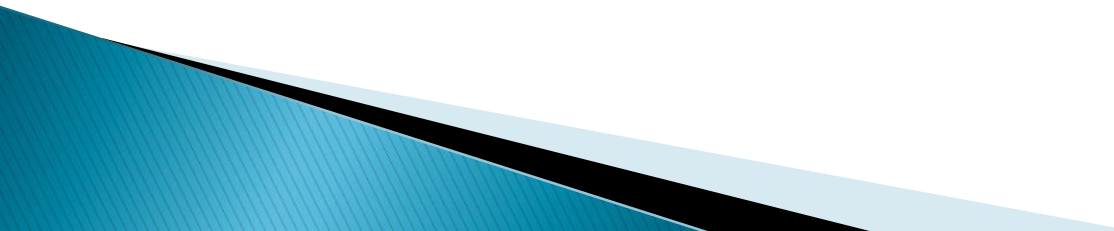


Examples: Reasonable Modification

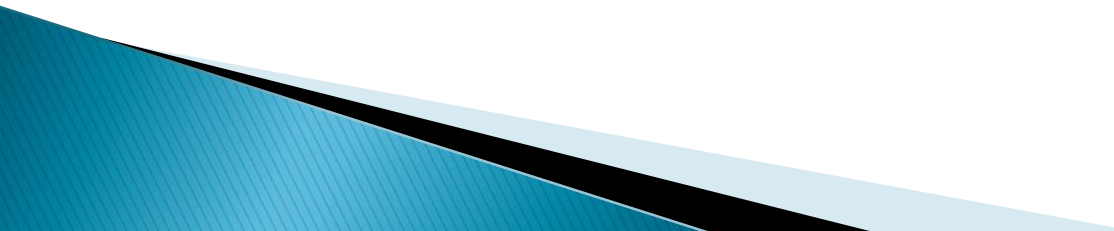
- Building a ramp.
 - Installing grab bars in the restroom.
 - Widening doorways.
 - Removing bathroom cabinet to allow access to sink.
 - Replacing carpet with accessible flooring.
 - Leveling doorway thresholds.
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Verification of Disability

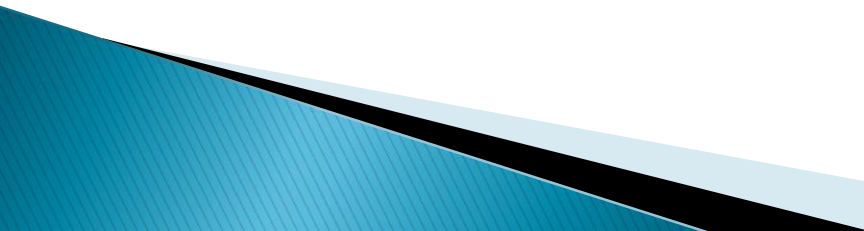
Housing Provider May Request Information that:

- ▶ Verifies that the person meets the definition of disability under the Fair Housing Act.
 - ▶ Describes the needed accommodation.
 - ▶ Shows the relationship between the person's disability and the need for the requested accommodation.
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Types of Verification

- ▶ Disability is apparent.
 - ▶ Proof of Social Security Disability Insurance benefits.
 - ▶ Letter from medical professional (i.e., doctor, therapist, social worker, occupational or physical therapist)
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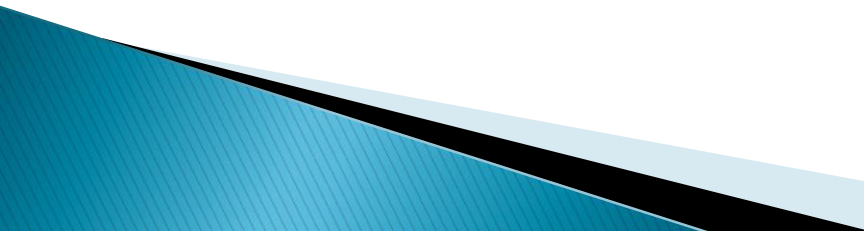
Can a landlord ask:

- ▶ Do you have a disability?
 - ▶ Have you tested positive for the Coronavirus?
 - ▶ How severe is your disability?
 - ▶ May I see your medical records?
 - ▶ Have you ever been hospitalized because of a mental disability?
 - ▶ Do you take medications? What kind?
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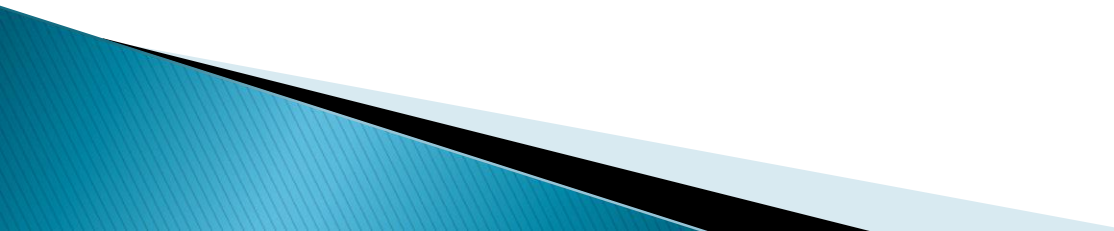
Two Legal Ways to Break a Lease

- ▶ Reasonable Accommodation
- ▶ Domestic Violence

Ways to Protect Yourself

- Make sure any agreements you make with your housing provider are documented in writing.
 - Letters and emails are preferable to text messages.
 - Know what's in your lease and abide by it.
 - Avoid using the drop box. Deliver documents and checks in person or via certified mail with delivery signature.
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Filing a Fair Housing Complaint

- ▶ The North Texas Fair Housing Center can process your complaint by phone or in person. You can also file a complaint through our website.
 - ▶ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - ▶ Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division
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NEED ASSISTANCE

**www.northtexasfairhousing.org
click on **ASK A QUESTION** or
FILE A COMPLAINT**

info@northtexasfairhousing.org

469-783-6158





Please email all question to:

QandA@NTADS.net

Questions will be accepted up to one hour following webinar and will be posted and link will be sent out.