

If you think you're being discriminated against, you don't have to deal with it alone.

Contact a fair housing agency in your area. These agencies help investigate housing discrimination. They might help you settle the matter directly, file a complaint, or take the issue to court.



JUST HOUSING INITIATIVE

People with records, like everyone else, deserve a place to call home.

WWW.JUSTHOUSINGINITIATIVE.ORG

GET ASSISTANCE FROM A FAIR HOUSING AGENCY:

Access Living
312-640-2106 (voice)
312-640-2102 (TTY)

HOPE Fair Housing Center
630-690-6500

Northside Community Resources
773-338-7722

Open Communities
847-501-5760

South Suburban Housing Center
708-957-4674

UIC John Marshall Fair Housing Legal Support Center
312-786-2267

EXPERIENCING DISCRIMINATION? FILE A COMPLAINT.

Cook County Commission on Human Rights
<https://bit.ly/CookCHR>
312-603-1100 (voice)
312-603-1101 (TDD)

HAVE QUESTIONS? WANT TO HOST A TRAINING?

Just Housing Initiative
info@justhousinginitiative.org

**HAVE AN ARREST
OR CONVICTION
RECORD?**

**RENTING A HOME
IN COOK COUNTY?**



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

YOUR NEW HOUSING RIGHTS

Effective January 2020

JUST HOUSING AMENDMENT

Amendment to the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance

Landlords can't ask about your arrest or conviction record on a housing application.

First, landlords must consider other factors, such as your ability to pay rent. They can consider typical qualifications, such as credit history, income requirements, or landlord references.

If you meet other application requirements, a landlord can then run a background check.

Landlords still can't consider:

- Conviction records more than 3 years old
- Arrests, charges or citations
- Participation in a diversion or deferral program
- Sealed, expunged, or pardoned records
- Juvenile records

Landlords **can** consider conviction records from the last three years, but only after giving you an opportunity to discuss your record and share more information.

When can a landlord still deny your application?

When your application does not meet their typical qualifications, such as credit history, income requirements, or landlord references.

When the denial is because of current sex offender registration requirements or child sex offender residency restrictions.

When your conviction is from the last 3 years and the landlord gives you a chance to discuss it but still decides you are a risk to people or property. If a landlord denies you for this reason, they must provide:

- A copy of any background checks they used
- An opportunity to respond to the accuracy and relevance of your conviction history
- A copy of their selection criteria
- Reasons why denying your application is necessary to protect the personal safety or property of others

The law applies to both private landlords and subsidized housing providers.

IF YOU HAVE A CONVICTION RECORD FROM WITHIN THE LAST 3 YEARS, LANDLORDS MUST CONSIDER FACTORS LIKE:

- Your history as a tenant
- Whether your conviction is related to a disability and if a reasonable accommodation could be provided
- Your age at the time of conviction
- Evidence of rehabilitation, such as letters of recommendation, going to school, securing employment, or volunteering in your community

Landlords must also give you an opportunity to present more information. This can include:

- Court-issued good conduct certificates
- Employer recommendations
- Education or vocational training
- Participating in programs that assist with the transition back to the community
- Letters of recommendation
- Other relevant information or documents



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOUSING APPLICATION

KNOW YOUR RECORD

You can get your records from the Illinois State Police or the Circuit Clerk in your county, or get your “rap sheet” from your local police department. These are official records, so there may be a fee.

CLEAR YOUR RECORD

You might be able to expunge or seal some or all of your record so that it won't appear in a criminal background check.

BE PREPARED

If you have been convicted within the last 3 years, be ready to explain why you'll be a good tenant and to explain any inaccurate information on your record. Gather helpful documents, such as letters of recommendation, to share.