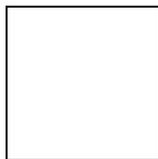


If someone you know has experienced housing discrimination, contact the **WFHP** now. When you contact the **WFHP** we will:



- Listen to your story and collect important information;
- Thoroughly investigate the complaint using civil rights testers if necessary;
- Provide legal help which may include giving you advice, negotiating with a landlord, or filing a lawsuit on your behalf.

**The WFHP services are free.**

**Fair Housing is the Law !  
Always report any incident  
of discrimination.**

**Contact the WFHP at  
508-752-3718  
1-800-649-3718  
TTY: 508-755-3260**

*The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and finding of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government.*

**C O M M U N I T Y  
L E G A L A I D**

**Worcester Fair Housing Project  
405 Main Street, 4th Floor  
Worcester, MA 01608**

# **Fair Housing and People with Disabilities**



**Worcester Fair Housing  
Project (WFHP) of  
Community Legal Aid  
We Can Help !**

**Both state and federal law provide protections for individuals with disabilities to ensure they have equal access to housing.** Individuals who have a history of disabilities or who are perceived as disabled are also protected.

State and federal law **prohibit housing discrimination** that is based on a tenant's disability.

### Types of Discrimination

Housing providers may be violating fair housing laws if they do the following things because of a tenant's disability:

- Refuse to rent or sell a property
- Charge additional fees or deposits
- Restrict the use of the amenities that are available to other tenants (e.g., a pool, gym or clubhouse)
- Give you false information about the availability of housing
- Ask whether a prospective tenant is able to live independently
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations or modifications

### Accommodations/Modifications

State and federal law also provide that housing providers must make reasonable accommodations or reasonable modifications.

A **reasonable accommodation** is a change to a rule, policy or practice that is necessary for a person with a disability to use and enjoy his or her housing.

A **reasonable modification** is a physical change to a home or apartment that is necessary for a person with a disability to fully use and enjoy his or her housing.

For both reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications, the request must be related to the disability, be reasonable, and not impose an undue burden on the landlord. In some instances of reasonable modifications, the tenant may be responsible for the cost of the modification.



### Asking for an Accommodation

The person with the disability (or someone on their behalf) must request the change in rule, policy or practice. The housing provider may generally ask for proof of the person's disability (unless it is obvious) and for proof that the request is related to the disability.

### Common Requests

- Reserved parking near unit
- Allowing the tenant to have a live-in aide
- Allowing an assistance animal, despite a "no pet" policy
- Widening doorways or installing grab bars



### Special issues with Assistance Animals

**An assistance animal is not a pet.** It provides assistance to the person with a disability. An assistance animal **does not** need to have received special training or be certified as a service animal.