

Know Your Fair Housing Rights!

Housing Discrimination Based on Race and National Origin

If you are treated differently because of your race, ancestry, or because you speak a different language, you may be a victim of housing discrimination.

What is my “race”?

Your physical features that link you to a racial or ethnic group. For example, brown skin color may mean that your race is Latino.

What is my “national origin”?

Where you or your family comes from—in other words, your birthplace or ancestry. It can also refer to your culture or language.

It is **ILLEGAL** for a housing provider (landlord, manager, super, etc.) to use your **race** or **national origin** as a reason to:

- **Refuse to sell, rent, or lease** a place to live
- Delay or refuse to make **repairs** to your apartment
- Limit your use of **services** or **facilities** in a building
- Require different terms in your lease, such as different **rental charges** or **security deposits** for you

Can a landlord ask me about my immigration status? What about my Social Security number?

A private landlord should not ask about your country of origin or your immigration status. A landlord can ask you for your Social Security number, as long as *all* tenants or applicants are asked to provide it. Social Security numbers are used to run credit checks. If you don't have one, you can ask a landlord if there are alternative documents that you could provide.

Does my landlord have to hire an interpreter to communicate with me?

A landlord must make a reasonable effort to communicate with you, no matter what language you speak. He or she cannot deny you housing, services, or repairs within your apartment because you speak a different language. That is discrimination. However, landlords do not have to use interpreters or provide translations of applications or lease agreements.

Can I file a complaint of discrimination if I'm not a citizen?

Absolutely! Fair housing agencies do not need to know about your citizenship status and should not ask you.

I believe that I was denied housing because of my race. What can I do?

Report it to a fair housing agency (see attached referral list). Brooklyn A can help you to report a fair housing discrimination claim and in exploring different options for investigation.



Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
260 Broadway, suite 2 Brooklyn NY 11211
phone: 718/487-2300 or 1-800-696-6778
fax: 718/782-6790
www.bka.org

It is **illegal to retaliate** against someone for reporting housing discrimination, or helping someone else to report discrimination. Retaliation can take the form of evictions, harassment, threats, intimidation, or even a change in policy in the way your landlord handles a lease violation.