



# Liberty County Board of County Commissioners

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P.O. Box 399; Bristol, FL 32321 (850) 643-2215

## The Liberty County Board of County Commissioners Supports Fair Housing

- Federal, state and local fair housing laws prohibit discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings (including the advertising and marketing) and other housing-related transactions, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including sexual harassment), familial status and disability.
- The Fair Housing Act, with some exceptions, prohibits discrimination in housing against families with children under 18. In addition to prohibiting an outright denial of housing to families with children, the Act also prevents housing providers from imposing any special requirements or conditions on tenants with custody of children.
- Age is not a federally protected classification. However, children under 18 must be permitted under "familial status", unless the housing qualifies as senior (age 55+) housing. In order for housing to qualify for exemption on familial status, all 3 of the following criteria must be met: At least 80 percent of the units must have at least one occupant who is 55 years of age or older; the facility or community must publish and adhere to policies and procedures that demonstrate the intent to operate as "55 or older" housing; and the facility or community must comply with HUD's regulatory requirements for age verification of residents.
- Persons with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations for their disabilities (such as service or assistance animals), or to make reasonable modifications (such as grab bars or ramps) to their housing at their own expense, IF the change is directly related to their disability and can be provided without undue financial or administrative burden to the provider. All newly constructed multi-family dwellings of four or more units intended for first occupancy after March 13, 1991 must have: an accessible entrance on an accessible route, accessible common and public use areas, doors sufficiently wide to accommodate wheelchairs, accessible routes into and through each dwelling, light switches, electrical outlets, and thermostats in accessible location, reinforcements in bathroom walls to accommodate grab bar installations, and usable kitchens and bathrooms configured so that a wheelchair can maneuver about the space. Certain exceptions apply.
- Poor credit, current illegal drug use, ongoing violent behavior, sexual predator status, or similar factors are not protected by fair housing laws. The Fair Housing Act affords no protections to individuals with or without disabilities who present a direct threat to the persons or property of others. Determining whether someone poses such a direct threat must be made on an individualized basis, however, and cannot be based on general assumptions or speculation about the nature of a disability.
- Legal action to resolve and/or provide restitution for illegal discrimination may be taken by individuals, or by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or by the U. S. Justice Dept.
- For more information about fair housing laws, or to file a discrimination claim,
  - o visit the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's website: [hud.gov/fairhousing](http://hud.gov/fairhousing) OR
  - o call the Florida Commission on Human Relations at (850) 488-7082.