

# FAIR HOUSING & SOURCE OF INCOME

It is illegal to discriminate in housing based on federal, and all applicable state and local protected classes.

## Federal:

- race
- color
- sex
- national origin
- religion
- familial status
- disability

## Maryland:

- gender identity
- marital status
- military status
- sexual orientation
- source of income

## Anne Arundel County:

- age
- ancestry
- citizenship
- creed
- marital status
- occupation
- sexual orientation
- source of income
- gender identity or expression

## CAN LANDLORDS DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH HOUSING VOUCHERS IN MARYLAND?

No! It is illegal for a landlord to discriminate against anyone based on source of income, which refers to how someone pays their rent. Examples of sources of income include Housing Choice Vouchers, Rapid Re-Housing subsidies, and other rental assistance programs.

## WHAT DOES ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION TOWARD VOUCHER HOLDERS LOOK LIKE?

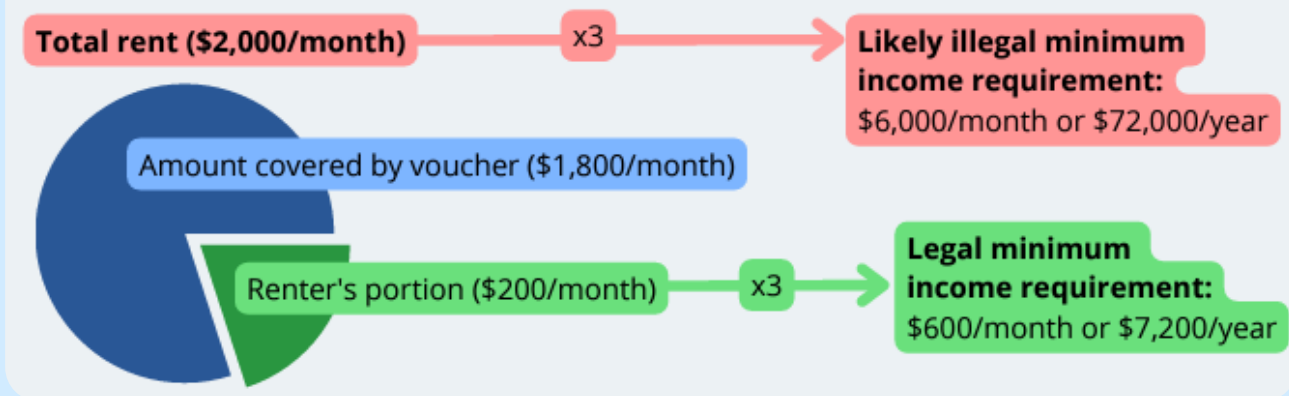
Some common examples include:

- A landlord who says that they won't accept vouchers,
- Advertising that vouchers will not be accepted,
- Charging a higher rent because someone pays with a voucher,
- Claiming that the Housing Authority has not pre-approved the unit, and
- Requiring an applicant to have a job.

## CAN MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO VOUCHER HOLDERS?

Many landlords require applicants to meet minimum income requirements. This may look like requiring an applicant to make three times the monthly rent. It would likely be illegal for a landlord to require a voucher holder to make three times the total rent. ***In Maryland, a landlord can only require a voucher holder to meet an income requirement for the tenant portion of the rent.***

### EXAMPLE MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENT CALCULATIONS FOR A VOUCHER HOLDER:



### BEST PRACTICES

- All legal sources of income should be accepted
- It is always a violation of the FHA to “make, print, or publish” discriminatory ads (e.g. “No Section 8”)
- Only apply minimum income requirements to the applicant’s portion of the rent
- Creating excuses to avoid accepting vouchers is discriminatory
- Changing terms & conditions to make it more difficult for a voucher holder to rent is discriminatory (e.g. increasing credit score requirement)

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [HUD: Application of the FHA to the Screening of Applicants for Rental Housing](#)
- [MD: Fair Housing Tenant Selection Policies](#)
- [HUD: Occupancy Standards](#)
- [ERC: Source of Income Discrimination in Housing Toolkit](#)

### WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I BELIEVE I’VE BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN HOUSING?

You can report housing discrimination to the ERC by calling 202-234-3062 or emailing [info@equalrightscenter.org](mailto:info@equalrightscenter.org). You can also file a complaint directly with HUD on their [website](#) or with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights on their [website](#).

### HOW CAN THE ERC HELP?



#### *Civil rights testing*

Trained civil rights testers pose as persons seeking housing to find out if and how discrimination is occurring.



#### *Fair housing complaint*

Assisting you with filing a housing discrimination complaint with HUD or the appropriate state/local agency.



#### *Reasonable accommodations & modifications*

Assisting people with disabilities with requesting reasonable accommodations or modifications.



#### *Advocacy*

Advocating on your behalf (ie. requesting a policy change) with a housing provider to address possible discrimination.