Do You Have a Disability?  Do You Need Special Living Arrangements?

Toledo Fair Housing Center
432 N. Superior
Toledo, OH  43604-1416
419-243-6163
toliedofhc.org

Certification of Status as an Individual with a Disability

According to federal civil rights laws, the definition of disability includes:

- a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment...

- physical or mental impairment includes: (1) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin, and endocrine; or (2) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities...

The term ‘physical or mental impairment’ includes, but is not limited to, such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments; muscular, neurological, emotional, and mental disorders; diabetes; male sterility; and diseases and conditions classified as mental illness (other than addiction caused by current, illegal use of a controlled substance) and alcoholism.

As a medical/social service professional with knowledge necessary to make such a determination, I certify that

___________________________

qualifies as an individual with a disability as defined above. (IMPORTANT: Do NOT reveal the
specific NATURE OR SEVERITY of the individual’s disability).

Certifying Individual:

______________________________________________________________

Date:

_____________________

The Fair Housing Act Protects You

Creating Inclusive Communities of Opportunity

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Persons with disabilities are protected by the Fair Housing Act. A disability is defined as any impairment that significantly limits a major life activity such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. In addition to physical disabilities, protection extends to those with mental and emotional disabilities as well.

In order for a person with a disability to fully use and enjoy their home, they may require changes to an apartment or house. Depending on the situation, a housing provider may be required to allow or provide for such changes.

- **Reasonable Accommodation**
  
  A change in a rule, policy, practice, or service is a reasonable accommodation. Examples include: allowing an assistance animal when pets are not allowed, creating a reserved parking space for a tenant with a disability, or requesting a ground floor residence due to limited mobility. Any minimal costs associated with a reasonable accommodation are generally absorbed by the landlord.

- **Reasonable Modification**
  
  A structural change, or an alteration of the premises, is a reasonable modification. Examples include: installation of grab bars, ramps, or lowered countertops. Costs for reasonable modifications are generally paid by the tenant, but housing providers receiving federal funding are required to absorb the cost.

Housing providers are required to allow accommodations and modifications, as long as they are reasonable and are being requested by a qualified individual. Each request should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. What may I be required to provide when requesting a reasonable accommodation or modification?

A housing provider may request the following information related to your disability:

- Verification of the qualified disability
- Description of the needed accommodation/modification
- Relationship between the disability and the need for the accommodations/modification

This information should only be requested if either the disability, or the need for the accommodation/modification, is not known or obvious.

Verification of the disability or need for accommodation/modification can be provided by a medical or social service professional, family member, or other reliable third party.

Housing providers generally cannot ask you to provide detailed medical records or inquire about the nature or severity of your disability.

Can a housing provider deny my request?

A housing provider may deny a request if they can demonstrate:

- There is no disability-related need for the accommodation/modification
- Providing the requested accommodation/modification would cause:
  - An undue financial or administrative burden;
  - A fundamental alteration of the provider’s operations

If a housing provider refuses your request because it is not reasonable, they should discuss alternative options with you in order to find a solution that effectively addresses your disability-related need. This known as the interactive process.

If you are unable to reach an agreement, or if you experience an undue delay in response to your request, please contact us for assistance.

### A landlord may NOT refuse to offer you the rental agreement he offers others:

- "People who use wheelchairs damage apartments. You have to leave a double security deposit."
- "You can only live here if there is someone to take care of you."

### A landlord may NOT refuse to rent to you, saying, for instance:

- "I can’t rent to you. I am afraid of future liability, if you get sick."
- "It’s not safe here. There is a lot of crime in my building."
- "Sorry, there are no apartments available. (If an apartment is available.)"
- "I don’t allow people to live in my apartments with 24-hour personal care attendants."

### Generally, a landlord may NOT ask...

- "How secure is your disability?"
- "May I have permission to see your medical record?"
- "Have you ever been hospitalized because of a mental disability?"
- "Have you ever been in a drug rehabilitation program?"
- "Do you take medications?"
- "Why do you receive SSI?"

In accordance with my rights under federal and state Fair Housing laws, I have a policy/procedure that (prohibits) (requires)

**REQUEST FOR AN ACCOMMODATION OF A HOUSING POLICY**

If you would like further help, please contact Toledo Fair Housing Center at 419-343-6163 or visit our website at toledohfc.org.

Am I entitled to changes needed to live in my rented apartment or house?

Any request for a reasonable accommodation or modification should be made by or on behalf of a person with a disability. This can be done at any time, either during the application process or while being a tenant.

A request can be made orally or in writing, but it is recommended that you put your request in writing to avoid misunderstandings. Your landlord may have a policy in place to address such requests.

At the right of this page we have attached a request for reasonable accommodation form that you may complete and provide to your landlord.

If you would like further help, please contact Toledo Fair Housing Center at 419-343-6163 or visit our website at toledohfc.org.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. The Toledo Fair Housing Center is committed to making our website accessible to people with disabilities. If you encounter any accessibility issues, please contact us at toledohfc.org.

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