



State of Illinois
Department of Human Rights

IDHR



A Guide to Your Fair Housing Rights

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
Human Rights

Office Hours

Monday through Friday
8:30am – 5:00pm

(No Intake Interviews on Fridays)

Chicago

James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph St., Suite 10-100
Chicago, IL 60601
312-814-6229 (Housing Intake)
866-740-3953 (TTY)

Springfield

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Springfield, IL 62704
217-785-5100
866-740-3953 (TTY)

Marion

2309 W. Main St.
Marion, IL 62959
618-993-7463

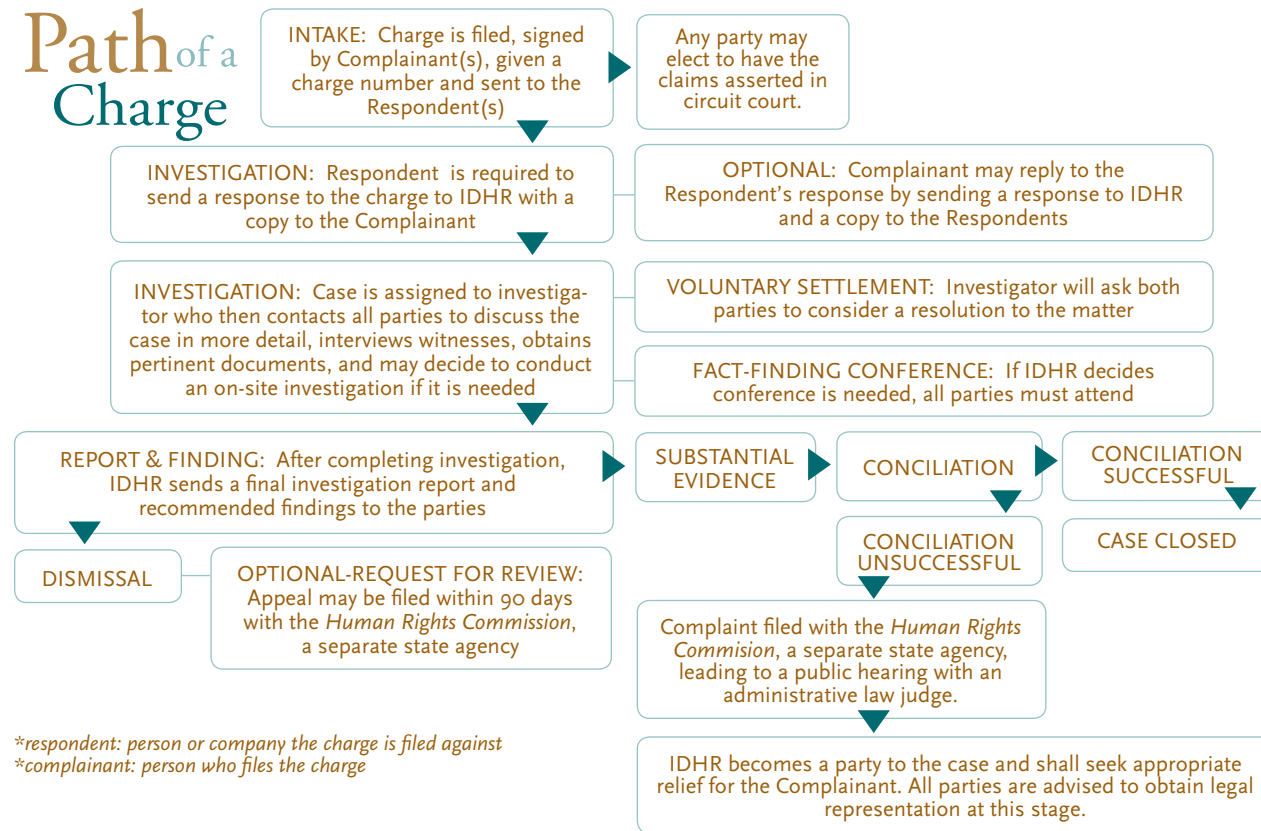
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Department of Human Rights will ensure that all programs are readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities. The ADA coordinator can provide additional information about compliance requirements, at (217) 785-5119 (voice) or (866) 740-3953 (TTY).

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www.illinois.gov/dhr
800-662-3942

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Path of a Charge



*respondent: person or company the charge is filed against
*complainant: person who files the charge

Illinois Department of Human Rights Procedures for Housing Cases

The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) is the state agency responsible for enforcing the Illinois Human Rights Act. The role of IDHR is to conduct a NEUTRAL and FAIR investigation of the allegations of discrimination stated in a charge. IDHR staff does not suggest reasons to file, but will discuss the various types of discrimination and explain the procedures for filing a charge.

IDHR represents the state's interest in eliminating discriminatory housing practices. However, we cannot give legal advice or represent either party. Attorneys are not required, but if you would like legal representation, you must obtain your own attorney. If you do not have legal counsel you may bring a friend or relative for advice or moral support. You may also bring an interpreter if needed.

All parties should assist in the investigation by having pertinent documents and information on witnesses readily available. Upon completing the investigation, IDHR will send the parties a copy of the investigator's report summarizing the information obtained and the recommended findings that either dismiss the case or indicate that IDHR has found substantial evidence of a violation of the Act.

If IDHR dismisses the case, the Complainant may file a request for review within 90 days to appeal the dismissal with the Illinois Human Rights Commission, a separate state agency.

If the Complainant wins the case at the Human Rights Commission, the judge may order remedies, including monetary and non-monetary relief, civil penalties, and attorneys fees and costs.

What is Fair Housing?

The purpose of this brochure is to inform you about your right to equal access in housing (seeking, buying, selling or renting), your right to choose where you want to live, and to enjoy the use of the facilities in your unit without feeling intimidated or discriminated against by owners, landlords, real estate agents or brokers, home appraisers, lending institutions, insurance companies, condo or housing associations, cities or municipalities, newspapers, or any other persons.

Examples of Housing Discrimination

If you have heard any of these phrases when renting or buying a home, it is possible you may have experienced housing discrimination.

- Let me show you a neighborhood where there are more people like you.
- Your English is no good! You can't rent here.
- No children allowed!
- You may not build a ramp for your wheelchair on the property.
- Sorry, the unit was just rented.
- We have a "no pets" policy- no matter if you say it's a service or support animal!

How am I Protected?

The Illinois Human Rights Act is a state law prohibiting discrimination based on any of the following protected classes:

- Race**
- Color**
- Religion**
- National Origin**
- Sex** (including sexual harassment)
- Disability** (having a physical or mental impairment, or the perception of such)
- Familial Status** (households with children under the age of 18, pregnant women, or in the process of obtaining legal custody of a minor)
- Age** (40 years of age or older)
- Ancestry**
- Marital Status** (single, married, widowed, divorced, separated)
- Sexual Orientation** (actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality or gender-related identity)
- Order of Protection Status** (for victims of domestic violence)

Illegal Actions Under the Law

It is illegal for property owners, landlords, real estate agents or any other person engaging in a real estate transaction to take any of these actions based on a protected class:

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for the sale or rental of a home
- Falsely deny the availability of a property for inspection, rental or sale
- Engage in steering
- Refuse to provide reasonable accommodations or to allow a disabled person to make reasonable modifications to a dwelling
- Intimidate, threaten or interfere with anyone making a fair housing complaint or exercising their housing enjoyment

How to File a Charge of Housing Discrimination

If you suspect housing discrimination, keep a record of any meetings and phone calls with landlords, property managers, real estate agents, loan officers, etc., including names, addresses, receipts and notes on what was said.

Contact our office as soon as possible (no later than one year after the harm) and speak with a housing staff member about your concerns.

You will need to complete a Complainant Information Sheet (CIS) either in person or by mail. If your allegations are covered under the Illinois Human Rights Act, a charge will be drafted for your signature.

If you visit us in person, please bring a valid government picture ID as you will have to present this and go through screening as part of building security measures.

What Happens After a Charge is Filed?

IDHR will assign the case to an investigator who will interview you and the other parties to obtain relevant documents.

In many cases, the investigator is able to help the parties resolve the matter, often within 100 days of filing the charge.

If the case cannot be resolved, IDHR will conduct a thorough investigation to determine if there is substantial evidence to support your case.