



Des Moines Area Association of Realtors®

Describe the Property-Not the People

Fair Housing is the sale/rental of housing free of discriminatory practices or policies. The Fair Housing Act prohibits any preference, limitation, or discrimination based on a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability (mental or physical), familial status or retaliation for having filed a charge, complained about discrimination to the management or landlord, or participated in an investigation or court proceedings involving discrimination.

The federal Fair Housing Act also prohibits publishing advertisements indicating any preference, limitation or discrimination based on these protected categories with respect to the sale or rental of a dwelling.

But practically speaking, any word or statement that may be perceived to limit a buyer's choices or indicate a preference based on their protected class should be avoided when advertising a property. While you may not intend to indicate a preference or limitation, even a client's perception may be construed as discriminatory.

The following word and phrase list is intended only to provide general guidelines to assist in complying with state and federal fair housing laws and nondiscriminatory practices. **This list is not intended to provide legal advice.**

NOTE: This list is *NOT* all-inclusive. It is not intended to be a complete list of every word or phrase that could violate any local, state or federal statutes. A general list cannot cover every situation or question. Each word must be considered in context.

If in doubt: DO NOT USE ethnic references (e.g. Black, Caucasian/White, Asian, American Indian)

DO NOT USE nationalities (e.g. Chinese, African, German, Italian)

DO NOT USE religious references (e.g. near temple, mosque, church, Christian, Muslim, Catholic)

DO NOT Use sex, gender or sexual orientation (e.g. male, femal, transfender, homosexual,gay)

PROHIBITED WORDS

able-bodied	english only	must comply with park rules	religious
active	gay	nationality	retarded
adult community	healthy only	near church	seasonal worker
adult living	Hispanic	near churches	senior discount
adult park	HIV	near temple	sex
adults only	impaired	negro	shrine
AIDS	Latino	net	single person
alcoholic	lesbian	newlywed	singles
bachelor pad	male only	newly-weds	spanish speaking
blacks	males only	no children	SSI
blind	married	no disabled	straight only
board approval required	mature complex	no families	supplemental Security income
Caucasian	mature couple	no handicap parking	synagogue
Chicano	mature individual	no play area	traditional neighborhood
colored	mature person	no wheelchairs	unemployed
colored couple	membership approval required	non-drinkers	whites
congregation	mentally handicapped	not for the handicapped	whites only
couple	mentally ill	older person	
couples only	migrant worker	one child	
crippled	Mormon Temple	one person	
deaf	mosque	parish	
drinkers	must be employed	physically fit	
empty nesters	must comply w/park rules	preferred community	

WARNING WORDS

55 and older	golden agers only	muslim	retirement home
62 and older	grandma's house	nanny's room	safe neighborhood
African American	group home	near country club	secluded
american indian	handyman's dream	no gays	secure
appalachian	hindu	no lesbians	security provided
asian	housing for older persons	no pets	senior
bachelor	housing for seniors	no Section 8	senior adult community
catholic	Hungarian	no student	senior citizens
Chinese	ideal for	no students	senior housing
christian	indian	older person	seniors
close to	integrated	older persons	single man
curfew	Irish	one person	single woman
desirable neighborhood	Italian	Oriental	snowbirds
domestics	Jewish	perfect for	sophisticated
domestic's quarters	landmark reference	phillippine	stable
exclusive	male only	Polish	summer visitor
executive	male roommate	prestigious	temple
female only	males only	private	tranquil setting
female roommate	man only mature	Puerto Rican	two people
females only	men only	quality neighborhood	walking distance of
Filipino	mexican	quiet tenants	winter visitor
fisherman's retreat	Mexican-American	restricted	woman only
gender	Mormon	retired	women only
gentleman's farm	mother-in-law apartment	retirees	

ACCEPTABLE

accessible	Equal Housing Opportunity	(neighborhood name)	quiet	smoking, no
alcohol, no	family, great for	nursery	quiet neighborhood	(square feet)
assistance animals only	family room fixer-upper	nursing home	references required	townhouse
bedrooms	golf course, near	places of worship, near	(school district)	traditional style
bus, near	great view	play area	(school names)	tranquil setting
convalescent home	guest house	privacy	seasonal rates	verifiable income
convenient to	handicap accessible	private driveway	secluded	view, with
credit check required	hobby farm	private entrance	security provided	wheelchair accessible
den	kids welcome	private property	senior discount	winter rental rates
desirable neighborhood	luxury townhouse	private setting	single family home	
drugs, no	master bedroom	public transportation, near	sleeping area (s)	
drug use, no	membership available	quality construction	starter home	

Senior Housing may be exempt if:

1. HUD has determined the housing is specifically designed for and occupied by elderly persons under a federal, state or local government program, or:
2. It is occupied solely by persons who are 62 or older, or:
3. It houses at least one person who is 55 or older in at least 80% of the occupied units and adheres to a policy that demonstrates an intent to house persons who are 55 or older.

For more information please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission: <https://icrc.iowa.gov/>