



Civil Rights & Equal Opportunity

Civil Rights Division

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HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IS ILLEGAL

The Municipal Code of the City of Kansas City (Chapter 38) prohibits discrimination in any aspect of housing because of an individual's:

- Race
- Color
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Mental or Physical Disability
- Gender Expression
- Gender Identity
- Being a Victim of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking
- Religion
- Age
- Marital Status
- Familial Status
- National Origin or Ancestry
- Ethnic Background
- Source of Income

Source of Income Discrimination refers to a type of prohibited housing discrimination based on an individual's type of income or finances. In January 2024, City Council passed Committee Substitute for Ordinance No. 231019 which aims to prevent discrimination against tenants on the basis of their source of income, prior criminal convictions or arrests, poor credit history or lack of credit history, or prior evictions. Tenants can report discrimination through the MyKCMO app or by calling 311 and any person found in violation of prohibited discriminatory practices may be subject to penalties.

All residential rental units in the City are required to adhere to minimum health and safety standards, including basic utilities and facilities, ventilation and heating, safety from fires, and overall safe and sanitary maintenance. Chapter 34, Article XIX of the Code of Ordinances.

It is unlawful for any individual to forcibly enter another person's residence, use weapons, make threats, take property, or break open doors or windows, regardless of whether anyone is present. Similarly, a landlord cannot use force or threats to evict or remove a tenant from the premises. Those



who are found guilty of such actions will be held liable for paying double the amount of damages to the affected person. (§534.020 & §534.330 RSMo.)

If a landlord wrongfully withholds all or any portion of a security deposit, the tenant may recover twice the amount wrongfully withheld. (§535.300, RSMo.)

In cases where a property's condition significantly affects its habitability, sanitation, or security, and violates municipal housing or building codes through no fault of the tenant, the tenant may have the option to deduct repair expenses from their rent. If the tenant has resided in the rental property for six consecutive months, consistently met all rental and fee obligations without violating any lease terms or house rules, and the landlord fails to address the issue or provide a written statement disputing the necessity of the repair within fourteen days, the tenant is entitled to provide the landlord with a detailed list of expenses along with receipts and proceed with necessary repairs. The cost of the repair may be deducted from a maximum of one month's rent, up to either three hundred dollars or half the rent, whichever amount is greater. (§ 441.234 RSMo.)

A person with a disability is entitled to a reasonable accommodation(s) and/or modification which is necessary to allow the person full and equal enjoyment of housing. An accommodation is not reasonable if its provision would result in an undue financial and administrative burden or a fundamental alteration of the housing provider's operation. (§ 213.040 RSMo.)

It is a discriminatory act to retaliate against a person who opposes a discriminatory practice or who participates in a discrimination investigation, proceeding or hearing. A landlord or its agent may not retaliate by increasing rent or decreasing services, threatening to evict or evicting the tenant because the tenant has organized or become a member of a tenants' union or similar organization. (Chapter 34, Article XIX, Division 3, Sec. 34-848, 34-408, 35-25, and 50-109)

Any person found to be in violation of these sections may be subject to an ordinance violation, which could result in a fine of up to \$1,000.00 and/or imprisonment for a maximum of 180 days pursuant to Chapter 38, Article III, Division I, Section 38-101 of the Code of Ordinances. Violators may also face the suspension or revocation of their permit pursuant to Chapter 34, Article XIX, Division 3, Sec. 34-857 of the Code of Ordinances.

Tenants within the City of Kansas City who believe their rights have been violated may seek additional assistance at www.kcmo.gov/city-hall/housing/tenant-resources or (816) 513-3008.

