

## **HOUSING DISCRIMINATION is prohibited in Orange County**

*Orange County protects an individual's basic right to fair and equal treatment when making housing choices. Protection applies to the sale, rental and financing of residential housing.*

### **Have you experienced housing discrimination?**

#### **Does this sound familiar?**

“We can't make an appointment to show you that house.”

“We can't rent to handicapped people.”

“If you go out with me, I won't evict you.”

“You might get a better deal at another bank. Go there first before you apply here.”

“Let me show you a neighborhood where you may feel more comfortable.”

Although some of the above statements may sound common, BE WARY - they may be excuses to keep you from renting or buying the home of your choice and it may be a violation of the law. You have the right to housing of your choice as long as it is within your means.

### **What if I believe I've experienced discrimination?**

Housing discrimination is usually not open and obvious—it is often done with a handshake and a smile.

If you suspect you may be a victim of housing discrimination within the last twelve months, contact the Orange County Housing, Human Rights and Community Development Department. We can assist you in filing a fair housing complaint and protect your rights under the law.

Remember that it is against the law to treat people differently or to deny people the opportunity to live where they want to live if it is within their means because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status.

### **What is Fair Housing?**

Fair housing means that you may freely choose a place to live without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability and familial status.

#### **The law prohibits the following discriminatory practices:**

- Refusal to rent, lease, or sell housing because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or familial status
- Setting different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of housing
- Falsely stating that housing is unavailable for view or inspection
- Discriminatory advertising
- Discriminatory financing
- Steering (attempting to sway renters/buyers to look for a home in a certain neighborhood)
- Blockbusting (frightening people into moving out of a neighborhood)
- Refusal to accommodate the disabled

Fair housing is a right protected by federal, state, and local laws. Your right to fair housing is enforced locally by the Orange County Housing, Human Rights and Community Development Department.

**What are the powers of the local fair housing agency?**

The Orange County Human Relations Commission has the jurisdiction to:

- Receive, initiate, investigate, conciliate and conduct public hearings on housing discrimination complaints filed with our office.
- Require answers to interrogatories and production of documents.
- Approve settlement agreements to reduce the effects of discrimination practices and monitor compliance with such agreements.

The Orange County Housing, Human Rights and Community Development Department is dedicated to eliminating housing discrimination and furthering equal housing opportunities through education, outreach, advocacy, and enforcement of fair housing laws.