

CAC Corner: Why is Fair Housing Important? | CPD

Sue Reeves

04/01/2015



**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**

Fair Housing means all people have equal access to the housing of their choice, which they can afford. Fair housing laws, like the Fair Housing Act, ensure this equal access.

The Fair Housing Act was enacted in 1968 and prohibits discrimination in the sale or rental of housing against people because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, familial status or disability. Utah law also prohibits discrimination based on a person's source of income.

The reason why these laws are so important is that housing plays a major role in defining a person's quality of life and is fundamental to our success. Our homes guarantee our family's security, ensure our personal contentment, and dictate our connection to community and access to opportunities. Where a person lives affects their social, cultural, educational and many other community amenities such as: schools, transportation, employment, medical services, retail services, recreation, entertainment and much more. Housing is such a basic need that if a person does not have a safe and stable place to live, they are not going to be successful in any other area.

Fair housing also promotes integration, which supports the basic American principle that "all men are created equal." Integration also breaks down ideas about "the other" and helps to build inclusive communities. Non-discriminatory, inclusive housing practices foster tolerance and understanding. They enhance individual and community economic success. Inclusive communities are more marketable for economic development and attract a

wider range of potential residents who make up a diverse workforce and who can support commercial and industrial enterprises.

Housing is a right of every American. Housing discrimination is an obstacle to housing choice and denies people the opportunity to fully experience and enjoy the "American dream" of choosing and being responsible for their own home.

If you would like more information about fair housing, or think you may have experienced housing discrimination, contact the Disability Law Center today.