



Your Housing Rights

View post: <https://disabilityrightsnorthcarolina.org/resources/faqs-on-housing-rights/>

There is a law that protects people with disabilities in housing. This law is called the [Fair Housing Act](#). Because of this law, landlords cannot refuse to rent to you because you or someone in your family has a disability. They cannot treat you badly because of your disability. And they must make changes to housing rules, and sometimes the building, so that you can use and enjoy your home.

Read on to learn more about your housing rights.

Can I ask for a change to a housing rule so I can have what I need for my disability?

Yes. A change to the rules for your disability is called a reasonable accommodation. The change must help you to use and enjoy your home just like a person without disabilities. If you need something because of your disability, you can ask your landlord for an accommodation.

Examples of a reasonable accommodation

- Letting you have a service animal when there is a “No Pets” rule
- Giving you a closer parking space if you have trouble walking
- Allowing you to move to another unit that is easier for you to use

If your landlord doesn't give you your request and your request is reasonable, it is called discrimination. This is not allowed.

Can I ask to change a structure in my home for my disability?

Yes. A physical change to your home that you need for your disability is called a reasonable modification. If you ask for this change, you usually also have to pay for it.

Examples of reasonable modifications

- Putting in ramps
- Making a doorway wider
- Adding grab bars and a roll-in shower in a bathroom

How do I ask for an accommodation or modification?

You can ask your landlord for an accommodation or modification at [any time](#). You should make your request in writing (email is OK) and keep a copy. Be sure to explain why you need this change for your

disability.

[See example letters](#)

Can my landlord ask me about my disability?

No. Not if your disability and disability-related need are obvious.

Here is an example:

- You are blind and are requesting an accommodation, a change to the “No Pet” rule for your guide dog. Your landlord cannot ask for more information.

Yes. If your disability isn’t obvious and your landlord doesn’t know you have it, they can ask you for proof.

What kinds of documents can I use to show I have a disability?

- A disability determination from a federal, state, or local government agency;
- Receipt of disability benefits (SSI or SSDI);
- Eligibility for housing voucher because of disability;
- Information from a health care professional confirming disability.

Your landlord should never ask for your medical records or your diagnosis. They can only ask for proof that you have a disability.

Can my landlord ask how my request will help me with my disability? Yes. If the reason for the accommodation or modification isn’t obvious. They need more information to understand why you need it.

Ask your provider to write a letter for you. The letter should to say why you need the accommodation or modification.

These are people you could ask to write the letter:

- Doctor
- Physical therapist
- Social worker
- Psychologist or psychiatrist

[See example letters](#)

Can my request be denied?

Most of the time your landlord must grant your request. If they refuse, it is discrimination. But there are [times when they can deny your request](#). If their answer is no, then they should work with you to find another solution that gives you what you need.

[See some examples](#) of when a request can or cannot be denied.

What do I do if I can't get what I need?

If your landlord waits too long to answer your request* or denies your request there are a few things you can do.

1. You can file a housing discrimination complaint or lawsuit in court. [Read more about these options.](#)
2. [Contact DRNC](#) to get help.
3. Contact the Fair Housing project of Legal Aid of NC: (855) 797-3247 or fairhousingnc.org.

*Providers have to respond to your request within a reasonable time. No more than ten days is a suggestion, but they may need longer depending on the circumstances of your request. Check out DRNC's [full information packet](#) for more information about reasonable accommodations and modifications.

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