

# DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE WITH HOUSING VOUCHERS IS ILLEGAL IN VIRGINIA!



## IS IT ILLEGAL TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST SOMEONE BECAUSE THEY USE A VOUCHER TO PAY THEIR RENT IN VIRGINIA?

Yes! It is illegal for a landlord to discriminate against you based on how you pay your rent. This is because “source of funds” is one of the protected identities included in Virginia’s fair housing law.

It is generally illegal for a housing provider to discriminate against you because you use a housing voucher, but there are some exceptions to protections for housing voucher holders under Virginia’s fair housing law. For more information, you can check out [this helpful guidance](#) issued by Virginia’s Real Estate and Fair Housing Boards in April 2021.

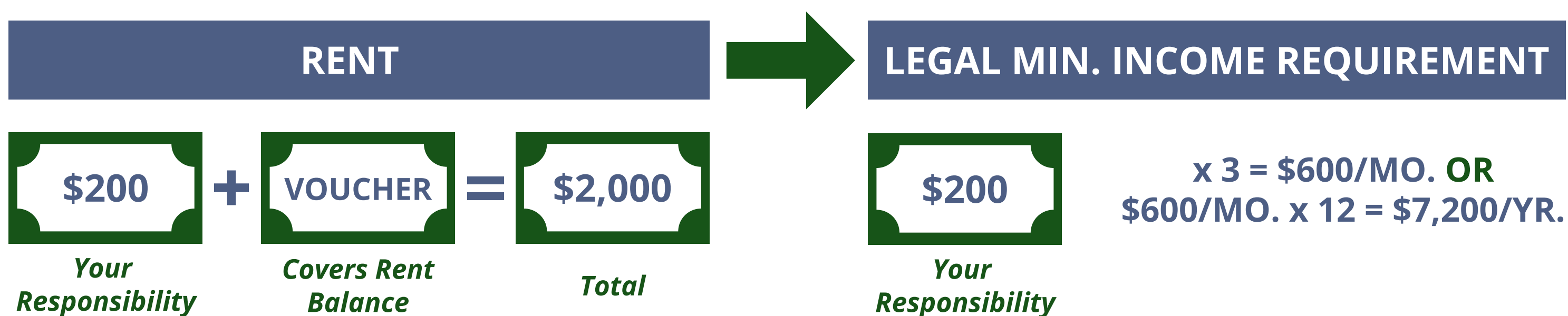
## WHAT DOES ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS PEOPLE WITH HOUSING VOUCHERS LOOK LIKE?

Some common examples include:

- A landlord telling you that they won’t accept vouchers;
- Advertisements that state “no Section 8 accepted” or “we do not accept vouchers”;
- A landlord charges a higher rent or security deposit because you pay with a voucher or subsidy;
- A property manager refuses to fill out and submit the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) packet to your local Housing Authority; or
- A housing provider has a minimum income requirement that would disqualify any voucher holder’s application. For example, requiring applicants to make \$100,000 per year would likely automatically disqualify any applications from voucher holders.

## HOW DO MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO PEOPLE WITH HOUSING VOUCHERS?

Many landlords require applicants to meet a minimum income requirement. Often an applicant must make 3 times the amount of monthly rent. If you are using a voucher to pay part of or all of your rent, a landlord can only require that you meet the income requirement for your portion of rent:



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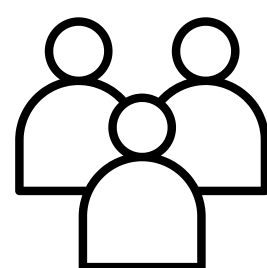
## WHAT OTHER TYPES OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION ARE ILLEGAL IN VIRGINIA?

The federal Fair Housing Act makes it illegal nationwide to discriminate against someone in housing based on their race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, and familial status (the presence of children in the household under the age of 18). Virginia's fair housing law includes those seven identities and additionally makes it illegal to discriminate based on a person's source of funds, elderliness (55+), sexual orientation, gender identity, and military status. Some cities and counties within Virginia may make it illegal to discriminate in housing based on additional identities.

## WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I BELIEVE I'VE BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN HOUSING?

If you live in northern Virginia, you can make a housing discrimination complaint with the Equal Rights Center by calling 202-234-3062 or emailing [info@equalrightscenter.org](mailto:info@equalrightscenter.org). Anyone who experiences housing discrimination in Virginia can also file a complaint with the [Virginia Fair Housing Office](#) or, if you live in Fairfax County, with the [Fairfax County Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs](#).

## HOW CAN THE ERC HELP?



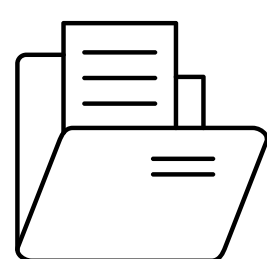
### ***Civil rights testing***

Trained civil rights testers pose as potential buyers or borrowers to find out if and how discrimination is occurring.



### ***Advocacy***

Advocating on your behalf with a housing provider to address possible discrimination.



### ***Fair housing complaint***

Assisting you with filing a housing discrimination complaint with the [Virginia Fair Housing Office](#) or, if you live in Fairfax County, with the [Fairfax County Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs](#).

## CONTACT US:



202-234-3062



[info@equalrightscenter.org](mailto:info@equalrightscenter.org)



[equalrightscenter.org](http://equalrightscenter.org)