

Housing Discrimination Against People With Vouchers Is Illegal In Maryland!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOUSING DISCRIMINATION:

1 CAN LANDLORDS DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH HOUSING VOUCHERS IN MARYLAND?

No! It is illegal for a landlord to discriminate against you based on source of income, which refers to how you pay your rent. Examples of sources of income include Housing Choice Vouchers, Rapid Rehousing subsidies, and other rental assistance programs.

2 WHAT DOES ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS VOUCHER HOLDERS LOOK LIKE?

Some common examples include:

- A landlord tells you that they won't accept vouchers;
- Advertisements that state "no Section 8 accepted" or "we do not accept vouchers"; and,
- A landlord charges a higher rent or security deposit because you pay with a voucher.

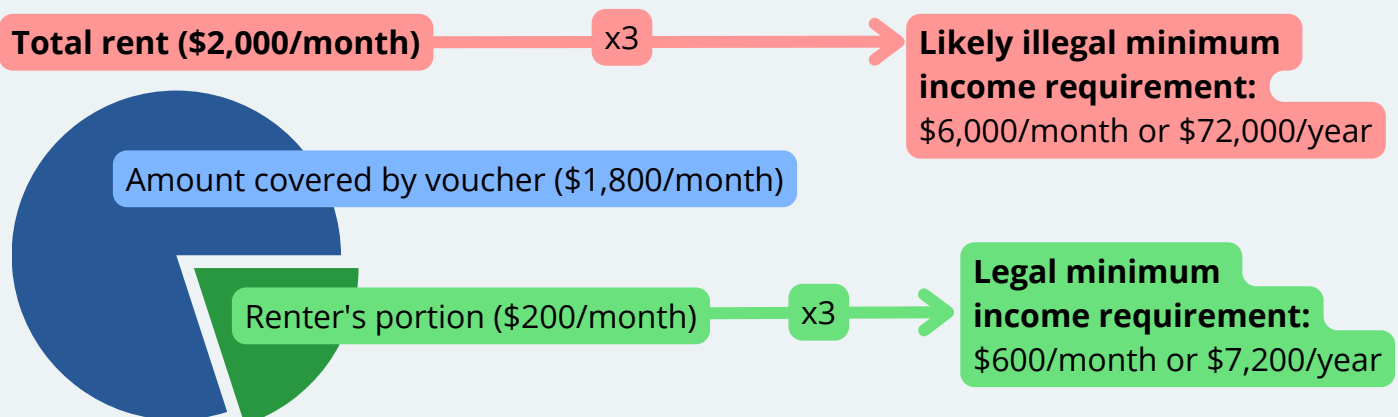
3 CAN LANDLORDS APPLY MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENTS TO VOUCHER HOLDERS?

Many landlords require applicants to meet a minimum income requirement. Often the applicant must make 3 times the amount of monthly rent. **If you have a housing voucher, a landlord can only require that you meet the income requirement for your portion of the rent.**

It would likely be discriminatory and illegal for a landlord to require an applicant with a housing voucher to make three times the *total rent*. Such a policy would likely result in many, if not all, voucher holders being rejected by the property, since individuals only qualify for vouchers if they make less than a certain income amount.

In the example below, the total monthly rent for a unit is \$2,000, the tenant's portion is \$200/month, and the housing voucher covers the remaining balance of \$1,800/month. A legal income requirement would be three times the applicant's portion of the rent: \$600 per month or \$7,200 per year.

EXAMPLE MINIMUM INCOME REQUIREMENT CALCULATIONS FOR A VOUCHER HOLDER:



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOUSING DISCRIMINATION:

4 WHAT OTHER LEGAL PROTECTIONS EXIST FOR HOUSING VOUCHER HOLDERS IN MARYLAND?

The federal Fair Housing Act makes it illegal to discriminate against someone in housing based on their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and familial status (the presence of children in the household under the age of 18). Maryland's Fair Housing Law makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of 4 additional protected classes: sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, and source of income. Plus, local cities and counties may have additional protections. Finally, it would be illegal for a landlord to discriminate against people with vouchers not only based on their source of income but any other protected characteristic, such as race, familial status, or disability.

5 WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE EXPERIENCED POSSIBLE HOUSING DISCRIMINATION?

You can report possible housing discrimination to the Equal Rights Center by calling 202-234-3062 or emailing info@equalrightscenter.org. People who experience housing discrimination in Maryland can also file a complaint with the [Maryland Commission on Civil Rights](#).

6 HOW CAN THE ERC HELP?



Civil rights testing

Trained civil rights testers pose as potential renters, 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 [Maryland Commission on Civil Rights](#).

CONTACT US:

202-234-3062

info@equalrightscenter.org

equalrightscenter.org

The information contained in this publication is not legal advice and should not be construed as such. For legal advice, please contact an attorney.

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