



LAES has developed a series of immigrant issue instructional modules entitled "Tierra de Oportunidad" for orientation to our complex society.

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LAES - Renting A Place To Live

Tierra de Oportunidad - Module 9

## Fair Housing--It's Your Right

### Reading 3

A Message From The Secretary:

Every American has a right to fair housing. The right to live where you choose, to raise a family, to own a home -- in dignity and without fear of discrimination -- is a fundamental right guaranteed to all. It cannot be denied to anyone because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or handicap.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development enforces the Fair Housing Act, which protects you against violations of your housing rights. We want you to know how you are protected and what to do if you believe you have been discriminated against.

I pledge to you that the Department will act quickly and efficiently on all complaints of discrimination brought to our attention, and that every American will receive the full protection of the law.

Henry Cisneros

## The Fair Housing Act

### Additional Protection If You Have a Disability:

your landlord may not:

- Refuse to let you make reasonable modifications to your dwelling or common use areas, at your expense, if necessary for the handicapped person to use the housing. (Where reasonable, the landlord may permit changes only if you agree to restore the property to its original condition when you move.)
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services if necessary for the handicapped person to use the housing. Example: A building with a "no pets" policy must allow a visually impaired tenant to keep a guide dog.

However, housing need not be made available to a person who is a direct threat to the health or safety of others or who currently uses illegal drugs.

Requirements for New Buildings: In buildings that are ready for first occupancy after March 13, 1991, and have an elevator and four or more units:

- Public and common areas must be accessible to persons with disabilities
- Doors and hallways must be wide enough for wheelchairs

- All units must have:
  - An accessible route into and through the unit
  - Accessible light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats and other environmental controls
  - Reinforced bathroom walls to allow later installation of grab bars and
  - Kitchens and bathrooms that can be used by people in wheelchairs.

These requirements for new buildings do not replace any more stringent standards in State or local law.

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