



**Describe the Property – Not the People**

Fair Housing is the sale/rental of housing free of discriminatory practices or policies. The [Fair Housing Act](#) prohibits any preference, limitation, or discrimination based on a person’s race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability (mental or physical) or familial status.

Wisconsin additionally includes other protected classes, such as ancestry, marital status, age (except minors), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, legal source of income (*refusing to accept a Section 8 rent assistance voucher, for example*), military/veteran status, and status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual abuse or stalking. Local ordinances may also include additional protected classes, such as physical appearance, political beliefs, student status, domestic partnership, homelessness, citizenship status, or genetic identity. For more information on local ordinances, please visit [Fair Housing Wisconsin](#), and/or inquire with the local municipality directly.

The federal Fair Housing Act also prohibits publishing advertisements indicating any preference, limitation or discrimination based on these protected categories with respect to the sale or rental of a dwelling.

Practically speaking, any word or statement that may be perceived to limit a buyer’s choices or indicate a preference based on their protected class should be avoided when advertising a property. While you may not intend to indicate a preference or limitation, even a client’s perception may be construed as discriminatory.

The following word and phrase list is intended only to provide general guidelines to assist in complying with state and federal fair housing laws and nondiscriminatory practices. This list is not intended to provide—and is not—legal advice. For answers to specific questions, please consult an attorney.

*NOTE: This list is NOT all-inclusive. It is not intended to be a complete list of every word or phrase that could violate any local, state, or federal statutes. A general list cannot cover every situation or question. Each word must be considered in context.*

If in doubt:

- DO NOT USE ethnic references (e.g. Black, Caucasian/White, Asian, American Indian)
- DO NOT USE nationalities (e.g. Chinese, African, German, Italian)
- DO NOT USE religious references (e.g. near temple, mosque, church, Christian, Muslim, Catholic)
- DO NOT USE sex, gender or sexual orientation (e.g. male, female, transgender, homosexual, gay)

**UNACCEPTABLE**

able-bodied	Chinese	Hindu	Mexican-American	Puerto Rican
adult community*	Christian	Hispanic	migrant workers, no	(religious references)
adult living*	colored	HIV	Mosque	rent assistance, no
adults only*	crippled	Hungarian	Muslim	responsible
adult park*	Couples only	impaired, no	Must comply with	retarded, no
African	church	Indian	(nationality)	seasonal workers, no
agile	deaf, no	Irish	Negro	Section 8, no
AIDS	disabled, not suitable for	Italian	newlyweds	senior discount, no*
alcoholics, no	employed	integrated	non-drinkers	(sex or gender)
American Indian	empty nesters	Jewish	older person(s)*	singles only
Appalachian Asian	English only	Latino	one child	Social Security Insurance
black(s)	(ethnic references)	married	Oriental	(SSI), no
blind, no	exclusive	mature couple*	parish	Spanish speaking
board approval required	executive	mature individual*	must comply with...	stable
Catholic	golden agers*	mature person(s)*	physically fit only	Straight only
Caucasian	group homes	membership required	Polish	Synagogue
Chicano	handicapped,	mentally disabled, no	preferred community	Temple
children, no	not suitable for	mentally ill, no	Protestant	tenant(s), description of
child(ren), (number of)	healthy only			unemployed, no
				white, white only

**ACCEPTABLE**

accessible	Equal Housing Opportunity	(neighborhood name)	quiet	smoking, no
alcohol, no	family room fixer-upper	nursery	quiet neighborhood	(square feet)
bedrooms, (number of)	golf course, near	nursing home	references required	townhouse
bus, near	great view	play area	(school district)	traditional style
convalescent home	guest house	privacy	(school name)	tranquil setting
convenient to	handicap accessible	private driveway	seasonal rates	verifiable income
credit check required	hobby farm	private entrance	secluded	view, with
den	luxury townhouse	private property	security provided	wheelchair accessible
desirable neighborhood	primary bedroom	private setting	senior discount*	winter rental rates
drugs, no	membership available	public transportation, near	single family home	
drug use, no		quality construction	sleeping area(s),	

\*Senior housing may be exempt if:

- 1) HUD has determined the housing is specifically designed for and occupied by elderly persons under a federal, state or local government program, or;
- 2) It is occupied solely by persons who are 62 or older, or;
- 3) It houses at least one person who is 55 or older in at least 80% of the occupied units, and adheres to a policy that demonstrates an intent to house persons who are 55 or older.

*For more information, please contact Metro MLS at [metromls.com](http://metromls.com) or 414-778-5400.*