

# HOUSING DISCRIMINATION RETALIATION

**PROJECT SENTINEL**  
A NONPROFIT FAIR HOUSING AGENCY



**It is illegal for a landlord to treat you differently because of your birthplace, ethnicity, culture, or ancestry. This includes refusing to rent an available unit, make necessary repairs to the unit, or harassing you because of your perceived national origin.**

Discrimination based on citizenship/immigration status, race, color, and primary language are characteristics that a landlord might use to discriminate because of your national origin.

In California, immigration status and primary language are protected classes. It is illegal for your landlord to treat you differently because your primary language is something other than English.

## RETALIATION

You have a right to exercise your renter's rights, including your fair housing rights.

It is illegal for your landlord to harass, attempt to evict, raise the rent or take any other kind of retaliatory action because you did any of the following:

- i. Filed a fair housing discrimination complaint
- ii. Contacted a fair housing agency, like Project Sentinel, for help
- iii. Requested a maintenance repair
- iv. Complained to the landlord about illegal or unsafe living conditions
- v. Reported to an appropriate agency such as a local code enforcement agency about illegal or unsafe living conditions





**Know your rights! Watch out for the following signs of retaliation:**

- a. Terminating a tenancy/filing an eviction lawsuit
- b. Restricting access to services such as use of the common room or laundry
- c. Harassing tenants
- d. Calling/threatening to call ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) or immigration authorities



**Did you know?** A landlord cannot terminate a tenancy based on your immigration or citizenship status.

**Housing discrimination** occurs when anyone involved with housing- including property managers, owners and mobile home parks- treats home seekers/ renters differently because of a protected category:

**Federal protected categories include:**

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Religion
- Sex/gender
- Disability
- Familial Status

**California protected classes include:**

- Primary language
- Citizenship or immigration status
- Sexual Orientation
- Source of income
- Age
- Gender Identity and expression
- Marital status

*Or any other arbitrary characteristic that is unrelated to a person's ability to be a good tenant.*

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM DISCRIMINATION?

If you notice any signs of housing discrimination, it is important to:

1. Document everything you see: Take notes on any application requirements, and the name and contact information of anyone you speak to. Keep copies of any rental ads, voicemails or emails.
2. Ensure you fully understand the terms of your lease before signing. Unless the property receives federal funding, the landlord has no obligation to provide an interpreter but you have the right to bring your own.

### DID YOU KNOW?

If the contract is negotiated in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, or Korean without an interpreter, the landlord must provide the contract in the same language.

## RETALIATION IS ILLEGAL- CONTACT PROJECT SENTINEL!

**It is illegal for your landlord to retaliate against you for reaching out to a fair housing agency like Project Sentinel for help.** Our services are completely free and our Fair Housing Center is not affiliated with any government agencies or entities. Project Sentinel does not discriminate based on income, race, or immigration status. Do not hesitate to call and reach out for help.

### OUR SERVICE AREA

Project Sentinel is able to provide assistance over the phone or at one of our many regional offices to individuals who experience housing discrimination in the following geographic areas:

Santa Clara County  
San Mateo County  
Stanislaus County  
Sacramento County  
City of West Sacramento  
City of Fremont  
City of Merced

### CONTACT

Contact Project Sentinel toll free:  
(888)-324-7468

[www.housing.org](http://www.housing.org)  
[info@housing.org](mailto:info@housing.org)

To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities:

Email: [scottrell@housing.org](mailto:scottrell@housing.org)

TTY:7-1-1



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