

Ban Discrimination Based on a Renter's Source of Income

SB 5407/HB 1633



ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO HOUSING FOR RENTERS RELYING ON HOUSING SUBSIDIES OR INCOME ASSISTANCE TO HELP PAY THE RENT

No one should be denied a home just because they use a housing voucher, social security, child support, or some other form of legal income support to help pay the rent. But in most places in Washington, landlords can categorically deny applications from tenants simply for using these methods of payment.

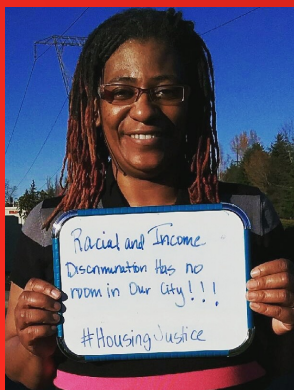
The private market must be part of the solution to ending homelessness, but when landlords refuse to rent to tenants who use subsidies, they contribute to the crisis. State law requires that 45% of the Home Security Fund - Washington's primary homelessness resource - be spent for vouchers in the for-profit rental market. Yet, tenants who try to use their vouchers are often not even given a chance to have their applications considered. This is a

significant mismatch in state priorities. Washington must ban discrimination in order to fully utilize the private market as a partner in ending homelessness.

Either intentionally or unintentionally, source of income discrimination can be a legal loophole for racial discrimination or discrimination against members of other protected classes, including families with children and people with disabilities. Refusing to accept vouchers limits options for families, and reduces access to thriving neighborhoods with jobs, transit, good schools, and other services.

Protection from discrimination is crucial to maximizing a family's ability to secure a safe and healthy home.

Protection From Discrimination Matters



Just after the beginning of this school year, dozens of families in Renton received notices that they had to move because their landlords would no longer be accepting Housing Choice Vouchers. The tenants organized, spoke to the media, and took the fight to the Renton City Council. The apartment owners changed course, allowing the families to stay. And, Renton City Council enacted an emergency ordinance to protect tenants who pay rent with Housing Choice Vouchers. However, that measure expires in June.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Source of Income Discrimination disproportionately impacts people of color, veterans, seniors, families with children, and people with disabilities, increasing their risk of homelessness
- Expanding choice allows tenants to live in high opportunity neighborhoods with good jobs, schools, and transit
- Source of Income Discrimination reduces the effectiveness of state and federal housing subsidies
- These communities in Washington already provide some protection against this kind of discrimination:

Seattle - Bellevue
Redmond - Kirkland
Renton - Olympia
Tumwater - Vancouver
Unincorporated King County

Track our advocacy on social media using the hashtag #WAhomes