

LAWFUL SOURCE OF INCOME

Protections under the NYC Human Rights Law

Your Public Assistance and Housing Vouchers Should Always Be Accepted Towards Rent and Security Deposits

The NYC Commission on Human Rights protects you from lawful source of income discrimination in housing. “Lawful source of income” is a protected category under the NYC Human Rights Law and includes any federal, state, or local public or housing assistance towards the payment of rent, such as Section 8, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA), CITYFHEPS, FHEPS, and the Veterans’ GI Bill, among others. Security deposits and one-time emergency grants (“one shot deals”), intended to assist tenants and applicants to housing who need assistance paying rent, security deposits, move-in fees or broker fees are also protected under the NYC Human Rights Law.

By enforcing and educating on the NYC Human Rights Law, the Commission is ensuring that our most vulnerable communities can have access to housing in New York City. The Commission can fine landlords and brokers and require that they pay damages to tenants or prospective tenants who are injured by their discrimination. The Commission can fine landlords and brokers and require that they pay damages to tenants or prospective tenants who are injured by their discrimination.

5 Things You Need To Know:

- 1. Nearly all rentals, including apartments located in co-op and condo buildings, are covered under the NYC Human Rights Law or the state law prohibiting source of income discrimination.** For some smaller buildings, the Commission may refer you to the NYS Division on Human Rights.¹
- 2. Brokers, landlords and any other housing agent cannot discourage you from applying for an apartment because you wish to pay your rent or security deposit with a form of public assistance.** Your public assistance or voucher income does not disqualify you or place you in a disadvantageous position when applying for an apartment.
- 3. “No Vouchers Accepted” ads are illegal.** It is unlawful for landlords and housing agents to publish any type of online, print, or broadcast advertisements that indicate a refusal to accept public or housing assistance programs, or vouchers.
- 4. Your landlord cannot refuse or delay making repairs to your home** because you pay rent with a form of public or housing assistance. Your landlord must make the repairs necessary to pass inspection for your program.
- 5. You have the right to be free from harassing, discriminatory, or threatening behavior or comments based on your protected status,** including from other tenants in your building.

Phrases like this could indicate discrimination based on your lawful source of income:



If you have experienced lawful source of income discrimination, report it. Contact the NYC Commission on Human Rights by calling **311** and asking for the Commission or call the Commission’s Infoline at **(212) 416-0197**. For more information and to download Fair Housing materials, visit NYC.gov/HumanRights.

¹ There are exceptions for (i) the rental of a room in a unit that is not publicly assisted and is shared with the owner or a member of the owner’s family, and (ii) the rental of a unit in a two-family building that is not publicly assisted, if one unit is occupied by the owner or a member of the owner’s family and the rental unit has not been publicly advertised. You do not need to know all of this information. If you aren’t sure if a building is covered, contact the Commission to ask!