



Choose Your Words Carefully

Are you well-versed in Federal Fair Housing laws? Could you use a refresher? Now is a great time to brush up on your knowledge of Federal Fair Housing laws. You want to be sure that your advertising and listing information is worded in such a way that it doesn't imply any preference, exclusion or limitation based on any protected class.

Here are some quick pointers that can help you better consider the dos and don'ts of the fair housing act in regards to advertising a property.

Religion

- Allowed: Places of worship nearby, apartment complex with chapel. Secular terms or symbols such as Santa Claus, Easter Bunny or Merry Christmas do not violate the Act.
- Not allowed: Near St. Joseph's Church, close to synagogue, or across the street from St Peter & Paul Catholic Home

Sex/Gender

- Allowed: Mother-in-law suite, bachelor apartment, Jack & Jill bathroom
- Not Allowed: Perfect for professional female; suitable for elderly man

Handicap

- Allowed: Wheelchair accessible, walk-out basement, jogging trails, walk to bus stop, wheelchair ramp
- Not allowed: no wheelchairs, crippled, able-bodied, ideal for active, healthy person, not wheelchair accessible

Race, Color, National Origin

- Allowed: French doors, Dutch Colonial style
- Not allowed: Integrated neighborhood, Private community, Hispanic community, Whites only

Familial Status

- Allowed: Statements like "Cozy three-bedroom bungalow" and "near shops, restaurants, public transportation".
- Not allowed: "Great for empty nesters", "great singles neighborhood" or "limit of 2 children". 'Adults only' is also not allowed, unless the property is specifically designated as housing for older persons.

This "Word and Phrase List," compiled by the Georgia Association of Realtors, lists what words can and cannot be used. It is an excellent tool for use when discussing Fair Housing.