

PROTECTED CLASSES

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing-related transactions, including advertising. Below you will find the protected classes within the [Fair Housing Act](#):

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex or Sexual Orientation
- National origin or Ancestry
- Age
- Familial or Marital Status
- Disability

*Senior housing is an exception. Offering senior housing is allowed under HUD based on [these requirements](#).

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

When it comes to marketing, retention, events, and social media, below are the questions that we always ask ourselves on every single piece of advertising we create or post at Royal American to ensure we fall in line with the latest fair housing requirements.

MAKE SURE **YES** IS THE ANSWER

- Does everyone feel represented?
- Does everyone feel welcome?

MAKE SURE **NO** IS THE ANSWER

- Is there anything that would make some feel excluded?
- Is there phrasing that only applies to one group of people?

BEST PRACTICES FOR FAIR HOUSING COMPLIANT MARKETING

- Focus on the property and its amenities, not on your "ideal" renter.
- Avoid mentioning specific religious holidays or practices.
- Avoid mentioning specific national or regional origins.
- Do not make statements that have the effect of excluding individuals of a protected class from your advertising initiative.
- Use gender-neutral terms and pronouns as often as possible. (e.g. "partner" or "spouse" instead of "husband" or "wife"; "child" or "student" instead of "son or daughter".
- When using photos, always use photos of diverse groups of people from all protected classes whenever possible.
- Incorporate the Equal Housing Opportunity logo in your ads and on your website.
- Incorporate the Americans with Disabilities Act Icon wherever relevant, such as on a floor plans or community amenities page.
- Anytime you display a phone number, always include the Telecommunications Relay Services number TDD: 711 for persons with a hearing or speech disability.
- When it comes to social media, Fair Housing laws still apply. It is important to be just as mindful of fair housing laws when sharing information and interacting with customers online as it is when sharing information and interacting in print and in person.

HOLIDAYS & FAIR HOUSING

Many holidays or national celebrations involve a protected classes, so apartment communities need to be careful on how they decide to carry these out. Avoid language that is religious or highlights a specific group of people.

DECORATING

If your property chooses to decorate, make sure that everyone feels represented. Focus more on lights, florals, greenery, color, etc. Stay away from items that are outright religious.

EVENTS

You can host events around these holidays, but make it more about the activity and less about the holiday itself. For example: It's not an "Easter Egg Hunt", it's an "Egg Hunt". It's not a "Christmas Party", it's a "Gift Exchange" or "Winter Wonderland Soiree".

THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Everyone is Welcome

The phrase "everyone is welcome" is something you can always use on every invitation, social post, text box text, signage, and more.