



When Applicants Can Be Rejected

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If you are an affordable housing provider, knowing the rules regarding when an applicant for housing can be rejected will greatly reduce complaints filed against you. Having a written guideline, or resident selection plan, that you can follow with each applicant may help you treat everyone uniformly. The Civil Rights and Fair Housing laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability. (See Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the HUD Handbook 4350.3 for more detail.)

Reject Reasons

1. Household income exceeds the program income limits
2. Ineligible for the project's specific requirements such as project designated for specific family types
3. Household size has exceeded the property's occupancy standards
4. Unwilling to disclose and provide proof of Social Security numbers for all family members age 6 or older
5. Unwilling to provide proof of U.S. citizenship or eligible non-citizens status as required for the assistance program
6. Refusal to sign and submit verification consent forms or the Authorization for Release of Information (forms HUD-9887 and HUD-9887-A)
7. Providing false information with the intent to deceive
8. Household maintains one or more residence
9. Failure to meet the criminal background screening criteria
10. Failure to meet the credit history screening criteria (lack of credit history is not a basis for rejection)
11. Failure to meet the rental history screening criteria (lack of rental history is not a basis for rejection)
12. Failure to meet one or more criteria stated in the property's resident selection plan
13. Unwilling/unable to pay the security deposit
14. Unwilling/unable to pay rent and comply with the lease requirements
15. Unwilling to give up housing choice vouchers in accordance with the property's subsidy type requirements

Notification Procedures

Rejection notice must be in writing (certified mail recommended). The rejection notice must state the specific reason(s) the application is rejected and must also inform the applicant that he or she has the right to respond within 14 days to appeal or dispute the rejection.



Meetings with Applicants to Discuss the Rejection

HUD requires that any meeting with the applicant must be conducted by someone who did not participate in the initial decision to reject the applicant. The owner or agent has five business days after the meeting to advise the applicant in writing of the final decision on eligibility.

In conclusion, the best way to avoid any dispute or challenge is to lay out the rules up front in the resident selection plan. Applicants should be made aware of the contents in the plan before proceeding with the application process.