

LANDLORDS

DO YOU RENT TO PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS?

IF NOT, YOU MIGHT BE...



... violating the Fair Housing Act. If you ban everyone with a criminal record, that can result in a disproportionate number of denials for people of color or other protected classes.



... misapplying HUD's rules for public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8). According to the Rules, only certain drug offenders and people subject to lifetime registration for sex offenses are barred. Applicants should only be rejected if the crime posed a threat to the health, safety, or right to quiet enjoyment of other tenants or property staff.



... unfairly punishing someone for something they did not do, especially if you consider arrests rather than just convictions.



... missing out on good tenants. Research shows that people are much less likely to commit another crime if they have a stable place to live. As few as three years after release, tenants with and without criminal records have similar outcomes in paying rent, leaving without notice, and lease violations for behavior. [Learn more.](#)

If you are a developer, owner, or landlord, RHLS is now providing **Tenant Selection Plan review services**. Please contact info@rhls.org for more information.

BEST APPROACHES FOR LANDLORDS:

- ★ **Consider** convictions, not arrests.
- ★ **Listen** to the applicant's story. How long ago was the criminal activity? How old was the person when they committed the crime? What have they done to live a better life since then?

- ★ **Understand** that people who have a stable place to live when they leave prison are less likely to commit another crime. Making sure people have a good place to live makes us all safer.

Information current as of March 2025.