

The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation was founded in 1987. It is a charitable non-governmental organization that promotes human rights in housing.

Call CERA! Our services are free.

# CERA

Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation

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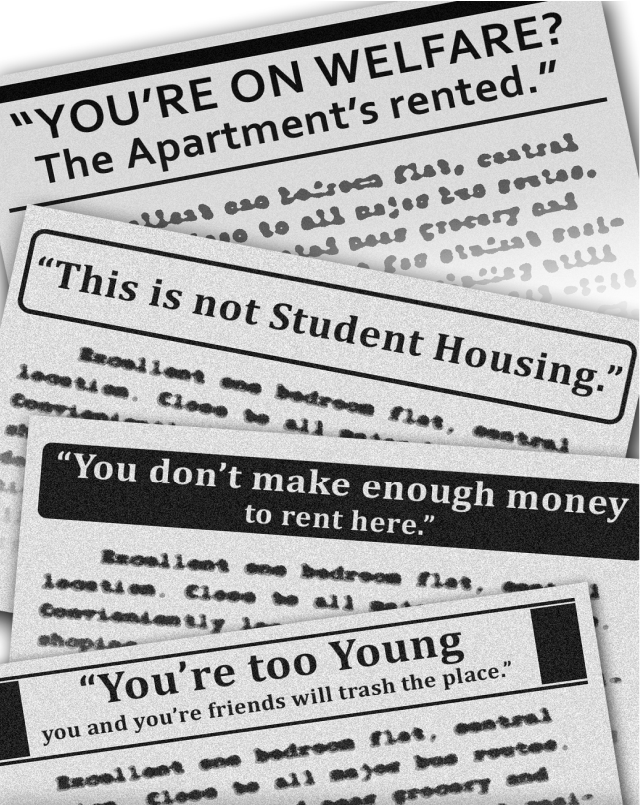
## Ottawa Office:

200 Maclaren Street, 2nd floor  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0L6

Production of this pamphlet was made possible by the generous support of the Ministry of the Attorney General



Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation  
Centre pour les droits à l'égalité au logement



# Young and Trying to find a place to live?

# DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW!

The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation

Tel: 416-944-0087 or 1-800-263-1139

# Human Rights in Housing

## DISCRIMINATION: WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

Everyone in Ontario has the right to rent and live in an apartment or house without discrimination.

It is against the law for a landlord to harass you, treat you unfairly or refuse to rent to you because:

- You are young (including being 16 or 17 years old)
- You are a person of colour
- You are receiving welfare or other government assistance
- You are a woman
- You are pregnant or have children
- You are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered
- You are from another country
- You have a mental or physical disability
- You practice a particular religion
- You are not married

Discrimination does not have to be intentional. Someone can discriminate against you without even knowing it.

## YOUTH

“You’re seventeen? I can’t rent to you. You’re too young.”

16 or 17 year olds who are living away from their parents cannot be refused an apartment because of their age. A lease signed by a 16 or 17 year old is legally binding.

## INCOME RULES

“Sorry, you have to earn \$30,000 a year to rent this apartment.”

A landlord should not refuse to rent to you because she does not feel that your income is high enough, or because your income comes from welfare, a Children’s Aid Society agency, or you earn minimum wage.

## LANDLORD REFERENCES AND CREDIT CHECKS

“I only rent to people with good references and good credit.”

A landlord should not refuse to rent to you because you are young and have no previous landlord references or credit history.

## What Are Your Rights?

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

#### Rental Application Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Hire: \_\_\_\_\_

Landlords should not require you to have a long, full-time employment history.

### Co-signors or Guarantors

If you have a bad rental history, landlords can require you to have a co-signor on your lease or someone to “guarantee” your rent. However, they should not require this just because you are young.

### DISABILITY

“This building has stairs. You knew that when you moved in. If you want a ramp, you should find somewhere else to live.”

If you have a disability, your landlord should make any changes you need to ensure that the building and your apartment are accessible—unless it would be financially impossible to do so, or it would unreasonably put you or other tenants at risk.

## Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation

### HARASSMENT

“It’s between you and the other tenant. I don’t want to get involved.”

You have a right to live free from harassment. It is illegal for a landlord, property manager, superintendent or another tenant to harass you because of your race, sex, age, children, disability, source of income, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

If you are being harassed by another tenant, your landlord should do something to stop it.

### CHILDREN

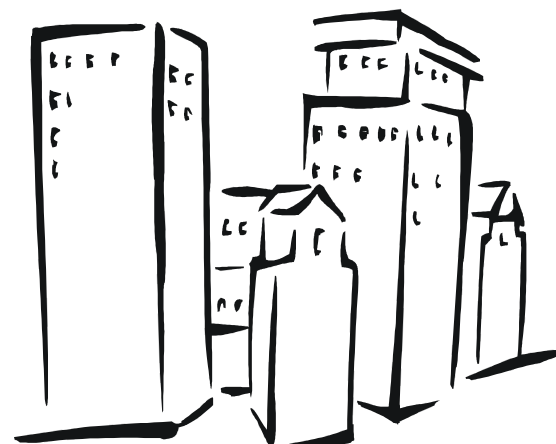
**Main St.** 1 bedroom apartment, unfurnished. ~~Laundry in building.~~ No parking. Suitable for single or couple. Call for \$\$.

“I’m sorry. It’s the building’s policy that children of the opposite sex cannot share a bedroom.”

Landlords should not refuse to rent to you because you have children, because the apartment is “too small”, or because of your family composition unless they would be breaking a local health and safety or over-crowding By-Law. “Adult Only” apartments are illegal.

### APARTMENT HUNTING

- Know your rights!
- Bring a friend. Now you have a witness.
- Dress neatly. Be polite.
- Fill out the application form completely. Keep a copy if possible.
- Write down the apartment address, telephone number, landlord’s name, rent, etc.
- Make use of your local housing help centre or other community organizations.



## CERA Can Help

### IF YOU EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION

Act now before the apartment is rented.

#### Write everything down

Date, time, what was said, who was there.

#### Get a witness

Have a friend call to see if the landlord will repeat the discriminatory comments.

### Call CERA!

Our services are free.

We can talk to the landlord and help stop the discrimination.

In Toronto:

**416-944-0087 ext. 22**

Outside of Toronto:

**1-800-263-1139 ext. 22**