ASSEMBLY, No. 3620

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 5, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblywoman BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

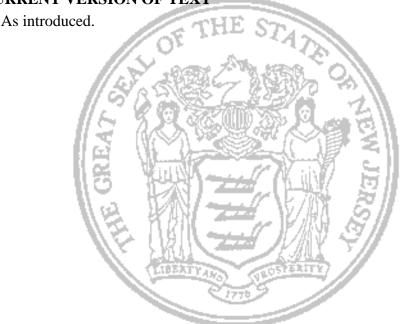
Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywomen McKnight, Vainieri Huttle, Assemblyman Holley and Assemblywoman Jasey

SYNOPSIS

Requires inclusion of information about discriminatory housing practices in Truth in Renting Guide.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/11/2021)

AN ACT concerning discriminatory housing practices and amending P.L.1975, c.310.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

- 1. Section 3 of P.L.1975, c.310 (C.46:8-45) is amended to read as follows:
- 3. a. (1) The department shall, as soon as practicable and annually thereafter, after public hearing, prepare and make available at no cost to the public, to the extent that funding has been made available to the department for free distribution, a statement, in a form and size suitable for posting and distributing pursuant to the provisions of this act, of the primary clearly established legal rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords of rental dwelling units.
- (2) This statement shall be printed in both the English and Spanish languages and shall be posted on the department's Internet website, in an easily printable format, and updated annually. The statement shall serve as an informational document, and nothing therein shall be construed as binding on or affecting a judicial determination under section 6 of P.L.1975, c.310 (C.46:8-48) of what constitutes a lease provision which violates clearly established legal rights of tenants or responsibilities of landlords.
- (3) The statement shall contain information about discriminatory housing practices prohibited under the "Law Against Discrimination," P.L.1945, c.169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.) in substantially the following form:

The New Jersey "Law Against Discrimination" requires equal treatment in the sale or rental of housing regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, familial status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental and physical disability, nationality, pregnancy, or source of lawful income. A State or federally issued housing voucher, or any other lawful rental subsidy, qualifies as a source of lawful income. Therefore, it is unlawful for a landlord to refuse to rent to persons on the basis that they would be paying with Section 8 housing vouchers or any other lawful rental subsidies. It is also an unlawful practice to advertise that a landlord will not rent to persons with Section 8 housing vouchers or any other lawful rental subsidies.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

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b. Where practical considerations make it necessary for the department to limit the extent of the statement, items to be included shall be selected on the basis of the importance of their inclusion in protecting the rights of the public.

(cf: P.L.2007, c.177, s.1)

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would require the Department of Community Affairs to include information in the Truth-in-Renting Guide that it is discriminatory and unlawful for a landlord: to refuse to rent to a person who would be paying with a housing voucher or other lawful rental subsidy; and to advertise that the landlord will not rent to persons with a housing voucher or another lawful rental subsidy. The bill would also require the department to include information in the Truth-in-Renting Guide indicating that State and federal rental housing vouchers are considered a source of lawful income, which is a protected category under the "Law Against Discrimination," and therefore, unlawful for a landlord to refuse to rent to persons who would pay with these rental subsidies.

Current law, "The Truth-in-Renting Act," requires the DCA to prepare, make available, and update annually a statement in English and in Spanish of the established rights and responsibilities of residential tenants and landlords in the State. The law requires the department to post this document, known as the Truth-in-Renting Guide, on the department's Internet website. The Truth-in-Renting Guide currently contains information about discriminatory housing practices, which are prohibited under the New Jersey "Law Against Discrimination," but does not specifically inform landlords, tenants, and the general public that it is unlawful to: (1) refuse to rent to persons with Section 8 housing vouchers, and (2) advertise that a landlord will not rent to persons with Section 8 housing vouchers.