



**Have you been subjected
to **discrimination** in the
housing market?**



Malmö
mot
Diskriminering

Swedish law states that everybody has equal rights regardless of who they are. Sweden has also signed conventions that state that housing is a human right. Many forms of discrimination occur in the housing market. The aim of this information leaflet is to give you an overall picture of how the law works in the event of being discriminated against in connection with housing and discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, however, the examples can also be used with other areas of discrimination. What is discrimination according to the law? In what ways can discrimination occur? Who is responsible, and where can you turn if you have been discriminated against?

To find out more about the provisions of the Discrimination Act and to read the legal text, search for the Discrimination Act (2008:567).

What is discrimination?

Discrimination means one person being treated worse than another because of their identity. According to the Act, the identities that one can be discriminated against are called areas of discrimination. According to the Discrimination Act, there are seven different areas of discrimination, they are: gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity (this includes skin colour and different ethnicities such as Swedish, Roma, Syrians, Chinese etc.), religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age.

When can discrimination occur?

In the housing market, you can be discriminated against in different ways and by different people. Below are **some examples** of when discrimination can occur in connection with housing:

Example 1, **renting accommodation:**

A family of Roma origin wants to rent an apartment in Staffanstorp. They are invited to view the apartment, and the landlord seems positive. However, when they arrive and the landlord sees them and hears their surname, he/she understands they are of Roma origin. They are told that the apartment is no longer available, despite the landlord stating otherwise beforehand.

Example 2, **changing apartments:**

A single mother of Somalian origin wants to change apartments because she thinks it is unsafe for her children to grow up in the area in which they live. She calls the landlord and is told that there are no vacant apartments in other areas. The mother knows that her Swedish friend with the same income has just moved with her children to an apartment in another area.

Example 3, **harassment from neighbours:**

A family of Roma origin with four children has received multiple complaints about noise from their

neighbours. The neighbours have even sent notes stating that they do not want Roma in their building. The family is scared of being evicted if they receive more complaints and have to keep the children quiet at all times. The family has told the landlord about the strained situation with the neighbours, but the landlord states that the neighbours have every right to complain and does nothing.

Example 4, **refusal to carry out apartment maintenance:**

An elderly couple from Iraq live in a rented apartment where the tap in the bathroom has stopped working. They call the landlord who replies that the tap was repaired recently and that people who are not from Sweden just destroy the apartment. The couple does not receive any assistance with the tap.

Example 5, **requirement of income:**

A family from Nigeria who have five children need to find accommodation. The parents are unemployed but receive subsidies from social services. They find a vacant apartment, but the landlord says that a job and salary is required in order to apply for housing.

Example 7, **lack of assistance in finding accommodation from social services:**

A non-Swedish speaking man who only speaks Lovara (a Roma dialect) has lost his accommodation and asks social services for help to prevent him

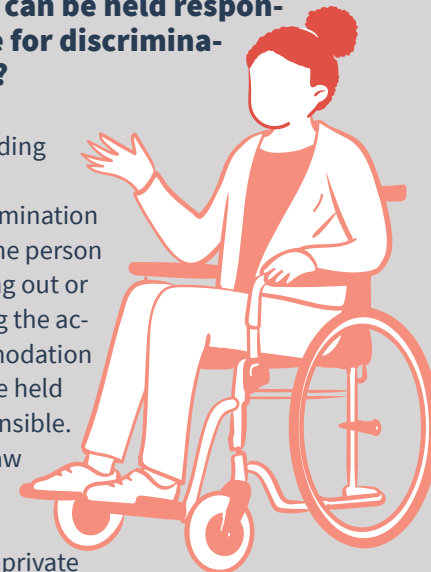
from becoming homeless. A social worker questions why the man has not learned Swedish and states that help is not given unless the language is learnt.

» **All the aforementioned examples are discriminatory and prohibited by law.**

Who can be held responsible for discrimination?

According to the Discrimination Act, the person renting out or selling the accommodation can be held responsible. The law does not

cover private individuals, **a person who sub-lets, for example, is therefore not covered by the Discrimination Act.** Individuals such as neighbours or tradesmen cannot be held responsible, it is the landlord's responsibility to provide assistance if neighbours harass and discriminate. Examples of those who can be held responsible are landlords, estate agents, tenant-owner associations, and social services (municipality).



What can I do if I have been discriminated against?

The Discrimination Ombudsman is the state authority responsible for ensuring compliance with the Discrimination Act. If you have been discriminated against, you can report the incident on their website:

- www.do.se/tips-ochw-klagomal

You can also report discrimination to one of Sweden's anti-discrimination agencies. Malmö mot Diskriminering (Malmö against Discrimination) is one of these and can be contacted by those who live in southern or eastern Skåne:

- www.malmomotdiskriminering.se
- radgivning@malmomotdiskriminering.se

One of the biggest difficulties in pursuing discrimination cases is that they can be very difficult to prove. It is therefore important that you save any pieces of evidence. For example, keep letters and/or e-mails, record conversations and videos, take someone to meetings who can act as a witness, when you feel subjected to discrimination.

If you report a case of discrimination to the Discrimination Ombudsman or us, proof is needed to be able to show a court that a case of discrimination has taken place.

If it is possible to prove to the court that a case of discrimination has taken place and, for example, a landlord is convicted of discrimination, you, as a person who has been discriminated against, are entitled to damages known as discrimination compensation.

Det här informationsbladet finns tillgängligt på **svenska, engelska, arabiska, somaliska, persiska, lovara, polsk romani, och arli** på vår hemsida:
• www.malmomotdiskriminering.se/bostad



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