

It is a violation of the Fair Housing Act for a landlord or his/her agents to ask for or require sexual favors in exchange for the rental of an apartment, lease renewal, repairs, or any other condition or privilege of renting.

Sexual harassment can range from the landlord or agent (superintendent, maintenance worker, rental manager, etc.) making sexual comments to actually physically assaulting you.

If you have engaged in sexual activity to pay the rent or security deposit or to get repairs made, and you refuse further demands for sexual contacts with the landlord, you may still be a victim of sexual harassment.

The landlord cannot retaliate against you because you say "no" or because you report him. He may try to evict you, refuse to do repairs, raise your rent, or threaten you because you refuse his sexual advances.

These are violations of the law, and you should report it immediately.

**Lawrence Human Relations Commission
and Human Relations Division
947 New Hampshire, Suite 200A
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
(785) 832-3310**

If you have questions about your rights or responsibilities under fair housing laws, contact the staff in the Human Relations Division for a consultation.

They can also provide you with copies of Chapter X, Article 1 of the Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas, the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, the Mobile Home Parks Landlord and Tenant Act, as well as informational brochures and posters.

City of Lawrence, Kansas
Legal Department
Human Relations Division
and
Human Relations Commission

1006 New Hampshire

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Sexual Harassment in Housing



**City of Lawrence, Kansas
Legal Department
Human Relations Division
and
Human Relations Commission**

1006 New Hampshire

Lawrence, KS 66044

785-832-3310

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Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Monday—Friday



City of Lawrence



Chapter X, Article I of the Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas and Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 prohibit discrimination in housing based upon sex. Sex discrimination includes sexual harassment.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment of a potential buyer, renter or tenant includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of renting or purchasing a housing accommodation; submission or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for refusing to rent or sell a housing accommodation; the conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with renting, making continued tenancy significantly less desirable, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive living environment.

IMPACT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Women are not the only victims of sexual harassment. Men may also be harassed. Renters often do not report harassment out of ignorance of the law or fear of reprisal. Some of the impacts of sexual harassment are:

- fear, emotional stress and related illnesses
- violation of privacy
- loss of sales
- disgruntled renters
- high turnover in renters
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EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is determined on a case-by-case basis. Acts which are offensive to one tenant or buyer may not be offensive to another. However, in addition to sexual assault, the following acts by a co-tenant, owner, on-site manager, property manager or agent may constitute sexual harassment:

- propositions or pressure to engage in sexual activity
- repeated body contact
- repeated sexual jokes, innuendoes or comments
- constant leering or staring
- inappropriate comments concerning appearance
- a pattern of renting to individuals because of their sex over more qualified persons
- any harassing behavior directed toward a person because of the person's gender

OWNER/AGENT LIABILITY

Owners and agents may be liable for monetary compensation and other forms of relief to buyers or renters who are victims of sexual harassment by:

- the owner or manager
- on-site managers, whether or not the owner knew of the sexual harassment
- co-tenants, when the owner knew or should have known of the sexual harassment and failed to take immediate corrective action;
- visitors to the premises when the owner knew or should have known of the sexual harassment and failed to take immediate corrective action

WHAT OWNERS SHOULD DO

The best tool for eliminating sexual harassment is prevention. The following steps will aid in preventing sexual harassment:

- develop and post a written policy defining and prohibiting sexual harassment and providing an effective procedure for reporting sexual harassment and disciplining those who engage in it
- provide training for all managers and employees in sexual harassment prevention;
- express strong disapproval of any sexual conduct in housing, including jokes and comments which may be offensive
- immediately investigate any report of sexual harassment by tenants or employees
- take immediate corrective action upon determining that sexual harassment occurred
- inform renters and buyers of their right to report sexual harassment to the City of Lawrence Human Relations Department or the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

WHAT RENTERS SHOULD DO

If you are offended by sexual jokes, comments or other sexual or gender-based conduct in your housing accommodations, immediately inform the manager. If your complaints are not resolved, you should take the following steps:

- report the sexual harassment to the manager and the owner;
- keep written records of the dates and facts of all sexual harassment and the names of witnesses;
- contact the City of Lawrence Human Relations Division at (785) 832-3310.



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