

■ **I want to become a Fair Housing Tester for ATC. What do I do next?**

Before ATC can assign your first fair housing test, you must attend a training workshop where you will learn how to perform fair housing tests. ATC will provide you with training materials and make sure you are ready to act as an objective fact-finder before you are given a test assignment.

■ **Who do I contact at ATC about becoming a Fair Housing Tester?**

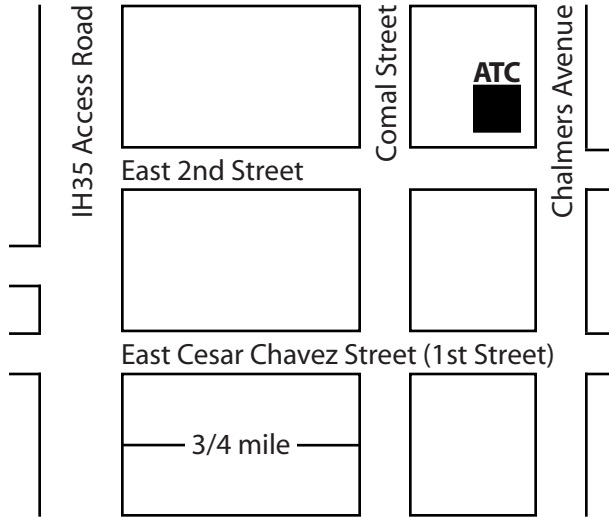
Call the ATC Fair Housing Testing Coordinator at 512.474.7007 to make arrangements to attend a tester training workshop. We will answer your questions about fair housing and will schedule you for a tester training workshop.

At the Austin Tenants' Council, we strongly believe all people have the right to pursue the housing of their choice without experiencing unlawful discrimination. You can support this civil right to freedom from housing discrimination by volunteering for ATC as a Fair Housing Tester.

**Help fight housing discrimination!**

**Be a Fair Housing Tester!**

**Directions to ATC:** From downtown, take East Cesar Chavez Street past the intersection with Comal Street. Turn left on Chalmers Avenue and cross 2nd Street. We are located in the two-story brick building on the left. **1640-B East 2nd Street, Suite 150**



ATC is funded by the City of Austin, Travis County, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and agency fundraising efforts.

The Austin Tenants' Council as a subrecipient of the City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Please call 512-474-1961 (voice) or Relay Texas at 1-800-735-2989 (TDD) for assistance.

The City does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Dolores Gonzalez has been designated as the City's Section 504/ADA Coordinator. Her office is located at 505 Barton Springs Road, Suite 600. If you have any questions or complaints regarding your Section 504/ADA rights, please call the Section 504/ADA Coordinator at 974-3256 (voice) or 974-2445 (TTY).

This publication is available in alternative formats. Please call 512-474-1961 (voice) or Relay Texas at 1-800-735-2989 (TDD) for assistance.

This service is certified as a lawyer referral service as required by the State of Texas under Chapter 952, Occupations Code.

# What Is Fair Housing Testing?



**Austin Tenants' Council**

1640-B East 2nd Street, Suite 150  
Austin, TX 78702  
[www.housing-rights.org](http://www.housing-rights.org)

## ■ **What is fair housing testing?**

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Fair Housing Testing is a way of measuring the quality, quantity, and content of information and customer service given to potential renters, home buyers, etc. by a housing provider based on a protected class under fair housing law.

In a rental test scenario, testers as similar as possible in all characteristics, except the protected class involved, visit the site of a housing provider (within an appointed time period) and inquire about the availability of housing. Afterwards, the testers objectively record in detail everything that happened during the test — what was said, what was offered, what price was quoted for an available apartment, etc. Later, the test coordinator compares the testers' objective reports to determine whether a difference in treatment based on the protected class occurred.

## ■ **What is a “protected class”?**

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The federal Fair Housing Act and Texas Fair Housing Act prohibit discrimination in housing (rental transactions, real estate transactions, brokerage services, home insurance, appraisal of housing) based upon specific bases, or protected classes — race or color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability.

## ■ **Why does ATC conduct fair housing testing?**

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ATC has a Fair Housing Enforcement contract with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. ATC is responsible for taking complaints of housing discrimination in the Austin metropolitan area and conducting tests of those complaints, when applicable, to gather information about the allegations made.

## ■ **Why is fair housing testing important?**

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Fair housing testing is an invaluable tool in measuring the practices of housing providers relating to the Fair Housing Act. Some unlawful housing discrimination practices can only be discovered through fair housing testing. Information gathered through fair housing testing can be used as evidence to support a client's administrative housing discrimination complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development or a private lawsuit against a housing provider. The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized and affirmed the importance of fair housing testing in fighting housing discrimination.

## ■ **If I become a Fair Housing Tester, will I have to make a rigid time commitment to ACT?**

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No. If you become a Fair Housing Tester for ATC, we will ask you to perform tests on an as needed basis. This means you may be asked to perform several tests one month and few or none the next. ATC seeks persons who are available to perform tests two to three hours during the normal business week.

## ■ **Are there certain restrictions on who can be a Fair Housing Tester?**

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Yes. Government regulations state that persons who have been convicted of a felony or a crime involving perjury may not serve as Fair Housing Testers. In addition, ATC must restrict persons who have specific biases or conflicts of interest, such as those involving employment, relatives, business competitors, or economic interests, from becoming Fair Housing Testers. Fair Housing Testers must undergo a criminal background check and certify under penalty of perjury that they meet the requirements outlined in the government regulations. ATC actively seeks person who can act as objective fact-finders to become Fair Housing Testers.