



5 Things You Should Know About the Prohibition on Racial Steering in New Jersey

- 1 The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) prohibits real estate brokers and housing providers from engaging in “racial steering.”** Racial steering is the practice of limiting someone’s choices for renting or buying housing by directing them towards or away from available housing based on actual or perceived race or national origin.
- 2 Racial steering occurs when a real estate broker or housing provider:** (1) advises clients to seek housing in a particular neighborhood or town, or not to seek housing in a particular neighborhood or town, because of their race or national origin; or (2) fails to show clients available listings because of their race or national origin. So steering occurs, for example, when a real estate broker shows a Black family homes only in predominantly Black neighborhoods, or when a property manager in an apartment complex declines to show Latinx applicants vacant units in a building where the large majority of residents are Chinese-American because he thinks either the current tenants or the applicants will be “uncomfortable.”
- 3 Unlawful steering may also occur later in the housing search process.** For example, a housing provider with units in different neighborhoods cannot use stricter income, credit, or other criteria for units in a predominantly white neighborhood than it uses for units in a majority-minority neighborhood in order to prevent minority applicants from renting apartments in the predominantly white neighborhood.
- 4 Steering is unlawful even if the real estate agent or housing provider does not believe they are motivated by racial bias or does not explicitly mention race or national origin.** It is unlawful for a broker to decide to show white families homes only in a predominantly white town (or to not inform those families of available listings in a more diverse town), even if the broker says it is because “the schools are better” in the predominantly white town. Likewise, if an agent decides to show Indian-American clients listings only in a particular neighborhood with many Indian-American families because she believes they will be “more comfortable” there, that is unlawful steering.
- 5 The LAD also prohibits steering based on any other protected characteristic, such as religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, and familial status.** Thus, a real estate agent or housing provider may not steer Jewish families seeking housing away from particular towns or steer non-Jewish families seeking housing away from particular developments.

To find out more or to file a complaint, go to [NJCivilRights.gov](https://www.njcivilrights.gov) or call **1.833.NJDCR4U**



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