



Fair Housing Center of West Michigan
20 Hall St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Qualifications for Testers

The following are some of the key points to consider when recruiting and selecting individuals to serve as “testers” in fair housing investigations or when deciding whether or not to become a fair housing “tester.”

1. Testers of **both sexes** are needed in **all races, ethnic identities and ages**. Many complaints received by the Fair Housing Center (FHC) involve allegations of racial discrimination against black homeseekers between the ages of 25-45, so a number of Black/White test teams in that age bracket are very useful. But often there is also a need for Hispanic and Native American individuals, handicapped persons, senior citizens and other types of testers.
2. Testers are **actors** and need to be able to feel comfortable **playing the role of a homeseeker**.
3. Testers need to be **flexible**, able to adjust to changing situations and still perform their assigned role as homeseeker.
4. Testers are **trained** in testing procedures by experienced fair housing tester trainers, and follow specific tester assignments for each test.
5. Testers need to be **objective** observers of events. Testers do not try to “find” discrimination. Testers instead pose as homeseekers and make accurate observations of what transpires during their test.
6. Testers must be **accurate recorders** of events. Testers will be expected to make an accurate, complete written record of their test on a FHC Test Report Form. Testers need to be able to write legibly and coherently.
7. Testers make **credible witnesses** in court. Preference should be given to those individuals whose past background, current standing in the community and ability to convey a message of truthfulness and competence will be recognized and respected by members of a jury. Therefore, testers must not have prior felony convictions or convictions of crimes involving fraud or perjury.
8. Testers must be **reliable** individuals who can be counted on to complete their agreed-upon assignments at the proper time and in the proper manner. Each tester is part of a “test team.” A breakdown by one member of the team could invalidate the test.
9. Testers must be willing to maintain **strict confidentiality** about their role as a tester. Normally, only your spouse/companion/immediate family need to know you are or are planning to become a “tester.”
10. Testers may be called upon to **serve as witnesses** in administrative hearings, depositions or court trials.
11. Testers must keep the Test Coordinator informed of any changes in address, phone number, employment or family status.