Fair Housing Tester FAQ

What is a fair housing tester?

A tester is someone who poses as a renter or homebuyer for the purpose of collecting evidence about housing transactions in our community. A tester meets with a real estate agent, landlord, property owner or building manager to ask about housing availability and records the results.

Why is testing important?

It’s not always obvious that what happened to an individual or family was the result of unlawful discrimination. Testers provide the additional information necessary to support a complaint, and thus can make a huge difference in achieving a just outcome.

What is a tester required to do?

Once you attend a three-hour training session and satisfactorily complete a practice test, you’re ready to serve as a tester. Testing assignments are handed out on an as-needed basis. After you receive a test assignment, you visit the housing provider in question, complete a questionnaire, write a factual narrative, and submit these documents to Open Communities’ test coordinator.

What is the time commitment?

While test assignments are time-sensitive, this work can be arranged to fit into your schedule. Testers include people who are employed and test in their free time, retirees, college students, and those in between jobs; some testers test once a year, some more frequently.

What is the compensation?

You receive $35 for the initial training and practice test and are then reimbursed $60 for each rental test and $85 for each home sales test. In all cases, you receive reimbursement for travel and related out-of-pocket expenses. Not to mention the satisfaction of knowing you’re helping to uncover, and therefore prevent, housing discrimination! Note: The frequency of test assignments cannot be guaranteed, so please don’t plan to rely on these funds to cover all your living expenses.

If you’d like to help perform this valuable community service, contact:

Christopher Riehlmann, Fair Housing Testing Coordinator
(847) 501-5760 x108 or chris@open-communities.org

REMEMBER: HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT. FAIR HOUSING IS THE LAW.