

# The Impact of Safe and Affordable Housing on Gender Equity

Safe and affordable housing is a fundamental human right that is inextricably tied to a person's economic outcomes, educational opportunities, and mental and physical health. Research demonstrates that women and women of color face additional barriers to securing stable housing.<sup>1</sup>



## HOUSING JUSTICE

Ensures that **safe, accessible** and **affordable** housing is available to everyone.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

People pay no more than **30% of their gross income** on rent and utilities.



## SAFE HOUSING

Standards of habitability that provides a person with **security and stability**.

Short- and long-term policy efforts that create more affordable housing options, strengthen tenant assistance programs and funds, and prioritize anti-racist anti-discriminatory housing guidelines are important in advocating for housing justice and advancing gender equity. **Because housing instability sits at the intersection of multiple issues, policy efforts that address the various factors that play a role in housing instability are needed.** This includes legislation that will support Nebraskans' economic security, strengthen resources provided to survivors of gender-based violence and protect Nebraskans' reproductive rights.



Advocacy for housing justice aligns with the Women's Fund values of: **Bold Impact, Community Voice, Collaboration, Equity and Intersectionality.** To learn more about our mission, vision and values, visit [www.OmahaWomensFund.org](http://www.OmahaWomensFund.org).



# HOUSING JUSTICE Legislation to Support



## LB 175: Eviction Clean Slate Relief (Introduced by Senator George Dungan)

The residual effects of eviction proceedings often harm individuals seeking to rent in the future. Currently, landlords can screen potential tenants for any previous eviction proceedings, including those in which the tenant won and was not evicted. Tenants with eviction filings and judgments on their record are less likely to find safe, affordable housing. **LB 175 will adopt the Residential Tenant Clean Slate Act which would automatically seal a tenant's eviction records for proceedings that end in a dismissal and allow tenants to apply for a record of eviction judgment to be sealed after three years.**

## LB 187: Right to Counsel

(Introduced by Senator John Cavanaugh)

Tenants facing eviction often don't have legal representation at the eviction hearing due to a lack of financial resources. Without representation, tenants are more likely to lose the case and be evicted. **LB 187 will require a court to**

**appoint counsel in an eviction proceeding for any tenant that does not have legal representation unless the tenant waives court-appointed counsel.** The cost of counsel in eviction cases will be paid for by the county.

## LB 248: Prohibit Source of Income Discrimination

(Introduced by Senator Tony Vargas)

Individuals receiving housing assistance separate from employment income often struggle to find a landlord willing to rent to them because of economic discrimination. **LB 248 will support renters using housing subsidies by amending the Nebraska Fair Housing Act to make it unlawful for a landlord to screen a potential tenant based on their source of income.**

## LB 270: Require Compliance with Local Rental Ordinances Before Evictions

(Introduced by Senator Terrell McKinney)

**LB 270 will require landlords to comply with any existing local rental ordinances before filing an eviction action.** It will also require that tenants be notified of code violations and condemnation at the same time as the landlord. This is an important protection for Nebraskans who live in substandard and unsafe housing.

## LB 545: Extends Evictions Timeline for Tenants

(Introduced by Senator Danielle Conrad)

Tenants being evicted need more time than currently allowed to prepare to leave the property and secure future housing. Under the current Residential Landlord Tenant Act, a writ of restitution (a document that authorizes the eviction of a tenant) must be presented *within* 10 days after an eviction judgment. **LB 545 will offer tenants additional time by changing the language to state that a writ of restitution cannot be presented until after 10 days post-eviction judgment.**



<sup>1</sup> National Partnership for Women and Families. (March 2022). "Housing Justice is Gender Justice." <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/housing-justice.pdf>