

# 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 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 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.**

### LB 845: Provide a Defense Against Evictions During the School Year

*(Introduced by Senator Megan Hunt)*

**LB 845 will allow tenants to defend against an eviction during the school year if their household includes children under 18, or a school or childcare educator or support staff.** Children are most at risk for eviction and the negative consequences of an eviction impact every other aspect of their lives including food security, future earnings and mental health. Protecting families against eviction is important for all of our other work.

### LB 1046: Right to Counsel for certain Public Housing Authorities

*(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. These issues are particularly acute for public housing tenants. **LB 1046 will require a court to appoint a free lawyer in an eviction brought by the public housing authority in Omaha.** The cost of counsel in these eviction cases will be paid for by the Omaha Public Housing Authority.



<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>