

# DISCRIMINATION

## CALIFORNIA LAW PROHIBITS WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT



Civil Rights  
Department  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) enforces laws that protect you from illegal discrimination and harassment in employment based on your actual or perceived:

- **ANCESTRY**
- **AGE** (40 and above)
- **COLOR**
- **DISABILITY** (physical, developmental, mental health/psychiatric, HIV and AIDS)
- **GENETIC INFORMATION**
- **GENDER EXPRESSION**
- **GENDER IDENTITY**
- **MARITAL STATUS**
- **MEDICAL CONDITION** (genetic characteristics, cancer, or a record or history of cancer)
- **MILITARY OR VETERAN STATUS**
- **NATIONAL ORIGIN** (includes language restrictions and possession of a driver's license issued to undocumented immigrants)
- **RACE** (includes hair texture and hairstyles)
- **RELIGION** (includes religious dress and grooming practices)
- **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION MAKING**
- **SEX/GENDER** (includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/or related medical conditions)
- **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

### THE CALIFORNIA FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT AND ITS IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS PROTECT CIVIL RIGHTS AT WORK.

#### HARASSMENT

1. The law prohibits harassment of employees, applicants, unpaid interns, volunteers, and independent contractors by any person. This includes a prohibition against harassment based on any characteristic listed above, such as sexual harassment, gender harassment, and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and/or related medical conditions.
2. All employers are required to take reasonable steps to prevent all forms of harassment, as well as provide information to each of their employees on the nature, illegality, and legal remedies that apply to sexual harassment.
3. Employers with 5 or more employees and public employers must train their employees regarding the prevention of sexual harassment, including harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.

#### DISCRIMINATION/REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

1. California law prohibits employers with 5 or more employees and public employers from discriminating based on any protected characteristic listed above when making decisions about hiring, promotion, pay, benefits, terms of employment, layoffs, and other aspects of employment.
2. Employers cannot limit or prohibit the use of any language in any workplace unless justified by business necessity. The employer must notify employees of the language restriction and consequences for violation.
3. Employers cannot discriminate against an applicant or employee because they possess a California driver's license or ID issued to an undocumented person.
4. Employers must reasonably accommodate the religious beliefs and practices of an employee, unpaid intern, or job applicant, including the wearing or carrying of religious clothing, jewelry or artifacts, and hair styles, facial hair, or body hair, which are part of an individual's observance of their religious beliefs.
5. Employers must reasonably accommodate an employee or job applicant with a disability to enable them to perform the essential functions of a job.

#### ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS

1. The law provides specific protections and hiring procedures for people with criminal histories who are looking for employment.
2. Employers with 5 or more employees and public employers must provide up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave to eligible employees: to care for themselves, a family member (child of any age, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling) or a designated

person (with a blood or family-like relationship to employee); to bond with a new child; or for certain military exigencies.

3. Employers must provide job-protected leave of up to 4 months to employees disabled because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition, as well as require employers to reasonably accommodate an employee, on the advice of their health care provider, related to their pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.
4. Employers, employment agencies, and unions must preserve applications, personnel records, and employment referral records for a minimum of four years.
5. Employment agencies must serve all applicants equally, refuse discriminatory job orders, and prohibit employers and employment agencies from making discriminatory pre-hiring inquiries or publishing help-wanted advertisements that express a discriminatory hiring preference.
6. Unions cannot discriminate in member admissions or dispatching members to jobs.
7. The law prohibits retaliation against a person who opposes, reports, or assists another person to oppose unlawful discrimination, including filing an internal complaint or a complaint with CRD.

#### REMEDIES/FILING A COMPLAINT

1. The law provides remedies for individuals who experience prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in the workplace. These remedies can include hiring, front pay, back pay, promotion, reinstatement, cease-and-desist orders, expert witness fees, reasonable attorney's fees and costs, punitive damages, and emotional distress damages.
2. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, you may file a complaint with CRD. Independent contractors and volunteers: If you believe you have been harassed, you may file a complaint with CRD.
3. Complaints must be filed within three years of the last act of discrimination/harassment/retaliation. For those who are under the age of eighteen, complaints must be filed within three years after the last act of discrimination/harassment/retaliation or one year after their eighteenth birthday, whichever is later.

**If you have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation at work, file a complaint with the Civil Rights Department (CRD).**

#### TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Civil Rights Department

[calcivilrights.ca.gov/complaintprocess](http://calcivilrights.ca.gov/complaintprocess)

Toll Free: 800.884.1684 / TTY: 800.700.2320 California Relay Service (711)

Have a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation? CRD can assist you with your complaint.

The Fair Employment and Housing Act is codified at Government Code sections 12900 - 12999.

The regulations implementing the Act are at Code of Regulations, title 2, division 4.1

Government Code section 12950 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 11023, require all employers to post this document. It must be conspicuously posted in hiring offices, on employee bulletin boards, in employment agency waiting rooms, union halls, and other places employees gather. Any employer whose workforce at any facility or establishment consists of more than 10% of non-English speaking persons must also post this notice in the appropriate language or languages.

For additional translations of this guidance, visit: [www.calcivilrights.ca.gov/posters/required](http://www.calcivilrights.ca.gov/posters/required)

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