CALIFORNIA LAW PROHIBITS WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT

The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) 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, mental, HIV and AIDS)
- GENETIC INFORMATION
- GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION
- MARITAL STATUS
- MEDICAL CONDITION (genetic characteristics, cancer or a record or history of cancer)
- MILITARY OR VETERAN STATUS
- NATIONAL ORIGIN (includes language use and possession of a driver’s license issued to persons unable to prove their presence in the United States is authorized under federal law)
- RACE (including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. Protective hairstyles includes, but is not limited to, such hairstyles as braids, locks, and twists)
- RELIGION (includes religious dress and grooming practices)
- SEX/GENDER (includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/or related medical conditions)
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION
THE CALIFORNIA FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT (GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 12900 THROUGH 12996) AND ITS IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS (CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2, SECTIONS 11000 THROUGH 11141):

1. Prohibit harassment of employees, applicants, unpaid interns, volunteers, and independent contractors by any persons and require employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment, gender harassment, harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/or related medical conditions, as well as harassment based on all other characteristics listed above.

2. Require that all employers provide information to each of their employees on the nature, illegality, and legal remedies that apply to sexual harassment. Employers may either develop their own publications, which must meet standards set forth in California Government Code section 12950, or use material from DFEH.

3. Require employers with 5 or more employees and all public entities to provide training for all employees regarding the prevention of sexual harassment, including harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.

4. Prohibit employers from limiting or prohibiting 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. Also prohibits employers from discriminating against an applicant or employee because they possess a driver’s license issued to a person who is unable to prove that their presence in the United States is authorized under federal law.

5. Require employers to reasonably accommodate an employee, unpaid intern, or job applicant's religious beliefs and practices, 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.

6. Require employers to reasonably accommodate employees or job applicants with disabilities to enable them to perform the essential functions of a job.

7. Permit job applicants, unpaid interns, volunteers, and employees to file complaints with DFEH against an employer, employment agency, or labor union that fails to grant equal employment as required by law.

8. Prohibit discrimination against any job applicant, unpaid intern, or employee in hiring, promotions, assignments, termination, or any term, condition, or privilege of employment.

9. Require employers, employment agencies, and unions to preserve applications, personnel records, and employment referral records for a minimum of two years.

10. Require employers to provide leaves of up to four months to employees disabled because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

11. Require an employer to provide reasonable accommodations requested by an employee, on the advice of their health care provider, related to their pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

12. Require employers of 20 or more persons to allow eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks leave in a 12-month period for the birth of a child or the placement of a child for adoption or foster care; also require employers of 50 or more persons to allow eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks leave in a 12-month period for an employee’s own serious health condition or to care for a parent, spouse, or child with a serious health condition.

13. Require employment agencies to 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.

14. Prohibit unions from discriminating in member admissions or dispatching members to jobs.

15. Prohibit retaliation against a person who opposes, reports, or assists another person to oppose unlawful discrimination.

FILING A COMPLAINT

The law provides for remedies for individuals who experience prohibited discrimination or harassment in the workplace. These remedies 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.

Job applicants, unpaid interns, and employees: If you believe you have experienced discrimination or harassment you may file a complaint with DFEH. Independent contractors and volunteers: If you believe you have been harassed, you may file a complaint with DFEH. Complaints must be filed within three years* of the last act of discrimination/harassment. For victims who are under the age of eighteen, not later than three years after the last act of discrimination/harassment or one year after the victim’s eighteenth birthday, whichever is later.

To schedule an appointment, contact the Communication Center below. If you have a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation, the DFEH can assist you by scribing your intake by phone or, for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or have speech disabilities, through the California Relay Service (711), or you can contact us below.

DFEH is committed to providing access to our materials in an alternative format as a reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities when requested.

Government Code section 12950 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 11013, 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.

CONTACT US

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www.dfeh.ca.gov

* Effective 1/1/2020.
The Employee Polygraph Protection Act prohibits most private employers from using lie detector tests either for pre-employment screening or during the course of employment.

**Prohibitions**

Employers are generally prohibited from requiring or requesting any employee or job applicant to take a lie detector test, and from discharging, disciplining, or discriminating against an employee or prospective employee for refusing to take a test or for exercising other rights under the Act.

**Exemptions**

Federal, State and local governments are not affected by the law. Also, the law does not apply to tests given by the Federal Government to certain private individuals engaged in national security-related activities.

The Act permits polygraph (a kind of lie detector) tests to be administered in the private sector, subject to restrictions, to certain prospective employees of security service firms (armored car, alarm, and guard), and of pharmaceutical manufacturers, distributors and dispensers.

The Act also permits polygraph testing, subject to restrictions, of certain employees of private firms who are reasonably suspected of involvement in a workplace incident (theft, embezzlement, etc.) that resulted in economic loss to the employer.

The law does not preempt any provision of any State or local law or any collective bargaining agreement which is more restrictive with respect to lie detector tests.

**Examinee Rights**

Where polygraph tests are permitted, they are subject to numerous strict standards concerning the conduct and length of the test. Examinees have a number of specific rights, including the right to a written notice before testing, the right to refuse or discontinue a test, and the right not to have test results disclosed to unauthorized persons.

**Enforcement**

The Secretary of Labor may bring court actions to restrain violations and assess civil penalties against violators. Employees or job applicants may also bring their own court actions.

**The Law Requires Employers to Display This Poster Where Employees and Job Applicants Can Readily See It.**
EMPLOYEE RIGHTS
UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION

LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS
Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

• The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
• To bond with a child (leave must be taken within one year of the child’s birth or placement);
• To care for the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
• For the employee’s own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job;
• For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee’s spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered servicemember’s spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer’s normal paid leave policies.

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

An employer may not interfere with an individual’s FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

• Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
• Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave;* and
• Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee’s worksite.

*Special “hours of service” requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

REQUESTING LEAVE
Generally, employees must give 30-days’ advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days’ notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer’s usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES
Once an employer becomes aware that an employee’s need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

ENFORCEMENT
Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information or to file a complaint:

1-866-4-USWAGE
(1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627
www.dol.gov/whd
U.S. Department of Labor | Wage and Hour Division
Under the California Family Rights Act of 1993 (CFRA), if you have more than 12 months of service with us and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12-month period before the date you want to begin your leave, and if we employ 50 or more employees at your worksite or within 75 miles of your worksite, you may have a right to a family care or medical leave (CFRA leave). This leave may be up to 12 workweeks in a 12-month period for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of your child or for your own serious health condition or that of your child, parent or spouse. If we employ less than 50 employees at your worksite or within 75 miles of your worksite, but at least 20 employees at your worksite or within 75 miles of your worksite, you may have a right to a family care leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of your child under the New Parent Leave Act (NPLA). Similar to CFRA leave, the NPLA leave may be up to 12 workweeks in a 12-month period. While the law provides only unpaid leave, employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking CFRA leave under certain circumstances and employees may choose to use accrued paid leave while taking NPLA leave.

Even if you are not eligible for CFRA or NPLA leave, if you are disabled by pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition, you are entitled to take a pregnancy disability leave of up to four months, depending on your period(s) of actual disability. If you are CFRA or NPLA-eligible, you have certain rights to take BOTH a pregnancy disability leave and a CFRA or NPLA leave for reason of the birth of your child. Both leaves contain a guarantee of reinstatement for pregnancy disability it is to the same position and for CFRA or NPLA it is to the same or a comparable position at the end of the leave, subject to any defense allowed under the law.

If possible, you must provide at least 30 days’ advance notice for foreseeable events (such as the expected birth of a child or a planned medical treatment for yourself or of a family member). For events that are unforeseeable, we need you to notify us, at least verbally, as soon as you learn of the need for the leave. Failure to comply with these notice rules is grounds for, and may result in, deferral of the requested leave until you comply with this notice policy.

We may require certification from your health care provider before allowing you a leave for pregnancy disability or for your own serious health condition. We also may require certification from the health care provider of your child, parent or spouse, who has a serious health condition, before allowing you a leave to take care of that family member. When medically necessary, leave may be taken on an intermittent or reduced work schedule.

If you are taking a leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child, the basic minimum duration of the leave is two weeks, and you must conclude the leave within one year of the birth or placement for adoption or foster care. Taking a family care or pregnancy disability leave may impact certain of your benefits and your seniority date. If you want more information regarding your eligibility for a leave and/or the impact of the leave on your seniority and benefits, please contact DFEH.

To schedule an appointment, contact the Communication Center below.

If you have a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation, the DFEH can assist you by scribing your intake by phone or, for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or have speech disabilities, through the California Relay Service (711), or you can contact us below.

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WHAT DOES “TRANSGENDER” MEAN?
Transgender is a term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender expression is defined by the law to mean a “person’s gender-related appearance and behavior whether or not stereotypically associated with the person’s assigned sex at birth.” Gender identity and gender expression are protected characteristics under the Fair Employment and Housing Act. That means that employers may not discriminate against someone because they identify as transgender or gender non-conforming. This includes the perception that someone is transgender or gender non-conforming.

WHAT IS A GENDER TRANSITION?
1. “Social transition” involves a process of socially aligning one’s gender with the internal sense of self (e.g., changes in name and pronoun, bathroom facility usage, participation in activities like sports teams).
2. “Physical transition” refers to medical treatments an individual may undergo to physically align their body with internal sense of self (e.g., hormone therapies or surgical procedures).

A person does not need to complete any particular step in a gender transition in order to be protected by the law. An employer may not condition its treatment or accommodation of a transitioning employee upon completion of a particular step in a gender transition.

FAQ FOR EMPLOYERS
• What is an employer allowed to ask?
Employers may ask about an employee’s employment history, and may ask for personal references, in addition to other non-discriminatory questions. An interviewer should not ask questions designed to detect a person’s gender identity, including asking about their marital status, spouse’s name, or relation of household members to one another. Employers should not ask questions about a person’s body or whether they plan to have surgery.

• How do employers implement dress codes and grooming standards?
An employer who requires a dress code must enforce it in a non-discriminatory manner. This means that, unless an employer can demonstrate business necessity, each employee must be allowed to dress in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression. Transgender or gender non-conforming employees may not be held to any different standard of dress or grooming than any other employee.

• What are the obligations of employers when it comes to bathrooms, showers, and locker rooms?
All employees have a right to safe and appropriate restroom and locker room facilities. This includes the right to use a restroom or locker room that corresponds to the employee’s gender identity, regardless of the employee’s assigned sex at birth. In addition, where possible, an employer should provide an easily accessible unisex single stall bathroom for use by any employee who desires increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason. Use of a unisex single stall restroom should always be a matter of choice. No employee should be forced to use one either as a matter of policy or due to harassment in a gender-appropriate facility. Unless exempted by other provisions of state law, all single-user toilet facilities in any business establishment, place of public accommodation, or state or local government agency must be identified as all-gender toilet facilities.

FILING A COMPLAINT
If you believe you are a victim of discrimination you may, within three years* of the discrimination, file a complaint of discrimination by contacting DFEH.
To schedule an appointment, contact the Communication Center below.
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