

EMPLOYMENT LAW SUMMARY

Louisiana Fair Employment Laws - Overview

Several [federal laws](#) protect employees from workplace discrimination. In addition, the [Louisiana Employment Discrimination Law](#) (LEDL) provides workplace discrimination protections to employees in the state, as described below.

COVERED EMPLOYERS

The LEDL generally applies to all employers with 20 or more employees working in Louisiana. However, its provisions addressing pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions apply only if an employer has at least 25 employees in the state.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

The LEDL prohibits employers from failing to hire, refusing to hire, firing or otherwise discriminating against an individual in the terms, conditions or privileges of employment based on the individual's:

- Race;
- Color;
- Religion;
- Sex;
- National origin;
- Natural, protective or cultural hairstyle (effective Aug. 1, 2022);
- Age (40 and older);
- Sickle cell trait;
- Disability;
- Genetic information; or
- Pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.

The LEDL also prohibits employers from:

- Retaliating against any individual for asserting their rights or participating in any claim or investigation under the law; and
- Using an applicant's criminal history in the beginning stages of the hiring process.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS

The LEDL requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for the following unless they can demonstrate that no accommodation may be made without imposing undue hardship on the operation of their business:

- The known disabilities of an individual who is otherwise qualified for a position; and
- The known limitations arising out of pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions of a female applicant or employee.

Undue hardship is determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all of the following:

- The employee or applicant for which accommodation is to be made;
- The specific disability of the employee or applicant;
- The essential job duties of the position; and
- The working environment.

NOTICE POSTING REQUIREMENTS

Employers must post written notices about certain protections under the LEDL. These include the protections against discrimination based on:

- [Age](#);
- [Genetic information](#);
- [Sickle cell trait](#); and
- [Pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions](#).

The required notices must be posted in conspicuous locations in areas that are accessible to employees in the workplace.

ENFORCEMENT

Individuals who believe an employer has violated the LEDL may file a complaint with the Louisiana Commission on Human Rights ([LCHR](#)). This must be filed within **180 days** after the violation occurred.

The LEDL also allows individuals to file lawsuits in a district court against an employer. However, before pursuing this type of action, an individual must give the employer at least 30 days' advance written notice, and both parties must make a good faith effort to resolve the dispute. Regardless of how long this process may take, lawsuits must be filed within **one year** after a violation. This one-year period does not run while a complaint with the LCHR or the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is pending.

If the LEDL or a court finds that an employer has violated the law, it may order the employer to pay:

- Compensatory damages;
- Back pay;
- Front pay;
- Attorney fees; and
- Court costs.

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