

The main law that deals with discrimination and harassment at the federal level is Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 governed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. This law prohibits discrimination and harassment based on characteristics such as race, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression), color, religion, national origin, ethnic origin, and ancestry. Employers are required to reasonably accommodate an employee's religious beliefs.

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act protects employees over the age of 40. The Americans with Disabilities Act protects employees with a physical or mental impairment that affects an important vital function, such as seeing, walking, hearing, breathing. Other protected categories are pregnancy and related medical conditions, military status, genetic information, and immigration status.

The California Department of Fair Employment Housing has 17 protected categories. They include race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, ancestry, gender identity / gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, medical condition, military or veteran status, disability, age 40 or older, genetic information, Political affiliations or activities, status as: victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking and the final request to leave Family Care, pregnancy or employees have a serious medical condition.

There are multiple avenues of complaint through human resources, your manager, supervisor, manager or executive, or anyone who is actually in a management position.

The EEOC provides a three-pronged approach as a guide for employers to prevent harassment. First, employers must adapt specific policies on sexual harassment, including a definition of harassment with real-life examples. Secondly, employers must have a solid complaint handling procedure, And number three, the EEOC suggests that employers should consider training all employees from the CEO to front-line employees to make sure they are sensitive to sexual harassment issues.

But California has gone a step further by requiring two hours of training every two years for anyone in a supervisory or leadership position. This law is called AB 1825. New hires must be trained within 30 days, and supervisors who are promoted must receive training within 6 months. The most recent law related to harassment prevention training is SB 1343. Employers with 5 or more employees need to train their staff for one hour by January 2021. Temporary or seasonal employees must receive training within 30 calendar days or one hundred hours if the employee will work for less than six months.