

# STATE OF NEW YORK

8971

## IN ASSEMBLY

January 31, 2024

Introduced by M. of A. LUCAS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the labor law, in relation to prohibiting discrimination against any individual with an actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 22 of section 296 of the executive law, as  
2 added by chapter 176 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

3 22. (a) It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employ-  
4 er or licensing agency, because of any individual's actual or perceived  
5 status as a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking to  
6 refuse to hire or employ or license or to bar or to discharge from  
7 employment such individual or to discriminate against such individual in  
8 compensation or in terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

9 (b) It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employer or  
10 employment agency to print or circulate or cause to be printed or circu-  
11 lated any statement, advertisement or publication, or to use any form of  
12 application for employment or to make any inquiry in connection with  
13 prospective employment which expresses, directly or indirectly, any  
14 limitation, specification or discrimination as to an actual or perceived  
15 status as a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking, or  
16 any intent to make any such limitation, specification or discrimination;  
17 provided, however, that no provision of this subdivision shall be  
18 construed to prohibit the employer from making any inquiry or obtaining  
19 information for the purpose of providing assistance to, or a reasonable  
20 accommodation in accordance with the provisions of this subdivision to,  
21 a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking.

22 (c)(1) It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employer  
23 to refuse to provide a reasonable accommodation to an employee who is  
24 known by the employer to be a victim of domestic violence, [~~limited to~~  
25 ~~those accommodations set forth in subparagraph two of this paragraph,~~  
26 ~~when such employee must be absent from work for a reasonable time,~~] a

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 sex offense, or stalking, where such accommodations would enable such  
2 employee to satisfy the essential requisites of a job unless such  
3 ~~[absence]~~ requested accommodations would cause an undue hardship to the  
4 employer as set forth in subparagraph three of this paragraph, provided,  
5 however that the employer may require an employee to charge any time off  
6 pursuant to this section against any leave with pay ordinarily granted,  
7 where available, unless otherwise provided for in a collective bargain-  
8 ing agreement or existing employee handbook or policy, and any such  
9 absence that cannot be charged may be treated as leave without pay. An  
10 employee who must be absent from work in accordance with subparagraph  
11 two of this paragraph shall be entitled to the continuation of any  
12 health insurance coverage provided by the employer, to which the employ-  
13 ee is otherwise entitled during any such absence.

14 (2) An employer is required to provide a reasonable accommodation to  
15 an employee who is a victim of domestic violence ~~[who must be absent~~  
16 ~~from work for a reasonable time]~~, a sex offense, or stalking in accord-  
17 ance with the provisions of subparagraph one of this paragraph, such  
18 reasonable accommodation may include, but shall not be limited to,  
19 absence from work for a reasonable time for reasons including, but not  
20 limited to, the following:

21 (i) Seeking medical attention for injuries caused by domestic violence  
22 including for a child who is a victim of domestic violence, a sex  
23 offense, or stalking, provided that the employee is not the perpetrator  
24 ~~[of the domestic violence]~~ against the child; or

25 (ii) Obtaining services from a domestic violence shelter, program, or  
26 rape crisis center as a result of domestic violence; or

27 (iii) Obtaining psychological counseling related to an incident or  
28 incidents of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking, including  
29 for a child who is a victim ~~[of domestic violence]~~, provided that the  
30 employee is not the perpetrator ~~[of the domestic violence]~~ against the  
31 child; or

32 (iv) Participating in safety planning and taking other actions to  
33 increase safety from future incidents of domestic violence, a sex  
34 offense, or stalking, including temporary or permanent relocation; or

35 (v) Obtaining legal services, assisting in the prosecution of the  
36 offense, or appearing in court in relation to the incident or incidents  
37 of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking.

38 (3) An employer is required to provide a reasonable accommodation ~~[for~~  
39 ~~an employee's absence]~~ in accordance with the provisions of subpara-  
40 graphs one and two of this paragraph unless the employer can demonstrate  
41 that the employee's absence would constitute an undue hardship to the  
42 employer. A determination of whether such an absence will constitute an  
43 undue hardship shall include consideration of factors such as:

44 (i) The overall size of the business, program or enterprise with  
45 respect to the number of employees, number and type of facilities, and  
46 size of budget; and

47 (ii) The type of operation in which the business, program or enter-  
48 prise is engaged, including the composition and structure of the work-  
49 force.

50 (4) It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employer to  
51 refuse to or otherwise fail to engage in cooperative dialogue within a  
52 reasonable time with an employee who has requested a reasonable accommo-  
53 modation under this section.

54 (5) An employee who must be absent from work in accordance with the  
55 provisions of subparagraph one of this paragraph shall provide the

1 employer with reasonable advance notice of the employee's absence,  
2 unless such advance notice is not feasible.

3 ~~[(5)]~~ (6) An employee who must be absent from work in accordance with  
4 the provisions of subparagraph one of this paragraph and who cannot  
5 feasibly give reasonable advance notice of the absence in accordance  
6 with subparagraph four of this paragraph must, within a reasonable time  
7 after the absence, provide a certification to the employer when  
8 requested by the employer. Any person required by subparagraph one of  
9 this paragraph to make reasonable accommodation may require a person  
10 requesting reasonable accommodation pursuant to this paragraph to  
11 provide certification that the person is a victim of domestic violence,  
12 a sex offense, or stalking. Such certification shall be in the form of:

13 (i) A police ~~[report]~~ or court record indicating that the employee or  
14 his or her child was a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense, or  
15 stalking;

16 (ii) ~~[A court order protecting or separating the employee or his or~~  
17 ~~her child from the perpetrator of an act of domestic violence;~~

18 ~~(iii)]~~ Other corroborating evidence, including evidence from the court  
19 or prosecuting attorney ~~[that the employee appeared in court]; [or]~~

20 ~~[(iv)]~~ (iii) Documentation from a medical professional, ~~[domestic~~  
21 ~~violence]~~ victim services provider or advocate, health care provider,  
22 cultural or religious provider, or counselor that the employee or his or  
23 her child was ~~[undergoing counseling or treatment for physical or mental~~  
24 ~~injuries or abuse resulting in victimization from]~~ obtaining assistance  
25 for an act of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking; or

26 (iv) Documentation from an attorney or any other professional service  
27 provider from whom the individual seeking a reasonable accommodation or  
28 child has sought assistance in addressing domestic violence, a sex  
29 offense, or stalking.

30 ~~[(6)]~~ (7) Where an employee has a physical or mental disability  
31 resulting from an incident or series of incidents of domestic violence,  
32 a sex offense, or stalking, such employee shall be treated in the same  
33 manner as an employee with any other disability, pursuant to the  
34 provisions of this section which provide that discrimination and refusal  
35 to provide reasonable accommodation of disability are unlawful discrimi-  
36 natory practices.

37 (d) To the extent allowed by law, employers shall maintain the confi-  
38 dentiality of any information and documentation regarding an employee's  
39 status as a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense, or stalking.

40 § 2. The section heading, paragraph b of subdivision 1 and paragraph c  
41 of subdivision 2 of section 201-g of the labor law, the section heading  
42 and paragraph c of subdivision 2 as added by section 1 of subpart E of  
43 part KK of chapter 57 of the laws of 2018 and paragraph b of subdivision  
44 1 as amended by chapter 160 of the laws of 2019, are amended and two new  
45 subdivisions 5 and 6 are added to read as follows:

46 Prevention of sexual harassment and responding to domestic violence,  
47 sex offenses, and stalking.

48 b. Every employer shall adopt the model sexual harassment prevention  
49 policy promulgated pursuant to this subdivision or establish a sexual  
50 harassment prevention policy to prevent sexual harassment that equals or  
51 exceeds the minimum standards provided by such model sexual harassment  
52 prevention policy, which, on and after January first, two thousand twen-  
53 ty-five, shall include guidance on workplace protections for victims of  
54 domestic violence, sex offenses, and stalking. Such ~~[sexual harassment~~  
55 ~~prevention]~~ policy shall be provided to all employees in writing as  
56 required by subdivision two-a of this section. Such model ~~[sexual~~

1 ~~harassment prevention~~] policy shall be publicly available and posted on  
2 the websites of both the department and the division of human rights.

3 c. Every employer shall utilize the model sexual harassment prevention  
4 training program pursuant to this subdivision or establish a training  
5 program for employees to prevent sexual harassment that equals or  
6 exceeds the minimum standards provided by such model training. Such  
7 sexual harassment prevention training shall be provided to all employees  
8 on an annual basis. On and after January first, two thousand twenty-  
9 five, any such training program shall include guidance on workplace  
10 protections for victims of domestic violence, sex offenses, and stalk-  
11 ing.

12 5. On and after January first, two thousand twenty-five, the depart-  
13 ment, in consultation with the division of human rights and the office  
14 for the prevention of domestic violence, shall ensure that the model  
15 sexual harassment prevention guidance document and sexual harassment  
16 prevention policy includes guidance on workplace protections for victims  
17 of domestic violence, sex offenses, and stalking, including language  
18 that: (i) prohibits discrimination by an employer or employment agency  
19 because of an employee or prospective employees status as a victim of  
20 domestic violence, a sex offense or stalking in accordance with subdivi-  
21 sion twenty-two of section two hundred ninety-six of the executive law;  
22 and (ii) prohibits the refusal of an employer to provide a reasonable  
23 accommodation to an employee known to the employer to be a victim of  
24 domestic violence, a sex offense or stalking in accordance with subdivi-  
25 sion twenty-two of section two hundred ninety-six of the executive law.

26 6. On and after January first, two thousand twenty-five, the annual  
27 model sexual harassment training program, mandated by subdivision two of  
28 this section, shall include: (i) an explanation of discrimination on the  
29 basis of one's status as a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense or  
30 stalking consistent with guidance issued by the department in consulta-  
31 tion with the division of human rights and office for the prevention of  
32 domestic violence; (ii) examples of conduct that would constitute unlaw-  
33 ful discrimination because of one's status as a victim of domestic  
34 violence, a sex offense or stalking; (iii) information concerning the  
35 state statutory provisions concerning discrimination because of one's  
36 status as a victim of domestic violence, a sex offense or stalking and  
37 remedies available to victims of such discrimination; and (iv) informa-  
38 tion concerning employees' rights of redress and all available forums  
39 for adjudicating complaints.

40 § 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2025. Effective immediate-  
41 ly, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation  
42 necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are  
43 authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.