STATE OF NEW YORK

4413

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 11, 2019

Introduced by Sen. METZGER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the labor law, in relation to notice of employee rights and remedies

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

Section 1. Section 203-e of the labor law, as added by a chapter of the laws of 2019, amending the labor law relating to discrimination based on an employee's or a dependent's reproductive health decision making, as proposed in legislative bill numbers S. 660 and A. 584, is amended to read as follows:

§ 203-e. Prohibition of discrimination based on an employee's or a dependent's reproductive health decision making. 1. An employer shall be prohibited from accessing an employee's personal information regarding the employee's or the employee's dependent's reproductive health decision making, including but not limited to, the decision to use or access a particular drug, device or medical service without the employee's prior informed affirmative written consent.

2. An employer shall not:

(a) discriminate nor take any retaliatory personnel action against an employee with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of or on the basis of the employee's or dependent's reproductive health decision making, including, but not limited to, a decision to use or access a particular drug, device or medical service; or

(b) require an employee to sign a waiver or other document which purports to deny an employee the right to make their own reproductive health care decisions, including use of a particular drug, device, or medical service.

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

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3. [~~An employer that provides an employee handbook to its employees must include in the handbook notice of employee rights and remedies under this section.~~

~~4.~~] An employee may bring a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction against an employer alleged to have violated the provisions of this section. In any civil action alleging a violation of this section, the court may:

(a) award damages, including, but not limited to, back pay, benefits and reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred to a prevailing plaintiff;

(b) afford injunctive relief against any employer that commits or proposes to commit a violation of the provisions of this section;

(c) order reinstatement; and/or

(d) award liquidated damages equal to one hundred percent of the award for damages pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subdivision unless an employer proves a good faith basis to believe that its actions in violation of this section were in compliance with the law.

[~~5.~~] 4. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit any rights of an employee provided through any other provision of law, common law or collective bargaining unit.

[~~6.~~] 5. Any act of retaliation for an employee exercising any rights granted under this section shall subject an employer to separate civil penalties under this section. For the purposes of this section, retaliation or retaliatory personnel action shall mean discharging, suspending, demoting, or otherwise penalizing an employee for:

(a) making or threatening to make, a complaint to an employer, co-worker, or to a public body, that rights guaranteed under this section have been violated;

(b) causing to be instituted any proceeding under or related to this section; or

(c) providing information to, or testifying before, any public body conducting an investigation, hearing, or inquiry into any such violation of a law, rule, or regulation by such employer.

§ 2. Section 203-e of the labor law, as added by a chapter of the laws of 2019, amending the labor law relating to discrimination based on an employee's or a dependent's reproductive health decision making, as proposed in legislative bill numbers S. 660 and A. 584, is amended by adding a new subdivision 6 to read as follows:

6. An employer that provides an employee handbook to its employees must include in the handbook notice of employee rights and remedies under this section.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as a chapter of the laws of 2019, amending the labor law relating to discrimination based on an employee's or a dependent's reproductive health decision making, as proposed in legislative bill numbers S. 660 and A. 584, takes effect; provided, however that section two of this act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after such chapter of the laws of 2019, takes effect.