

§4572. Unlawful employment discrimination

1. Unlawful employment discrimination. It is unlawful employment discrimination, in violation of this Act, except when based on a bona fide occupational qualification:

A. For any employer to fail or refuse to hire or otherwise discriminate against any applicant for employment because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, because of the applicant's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions taken by the applicant that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because the applicant sought and received an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; or, because of those reasons, to discharge an employee or discriminate with respect to hire, tenure, promotion, transfer, compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment or any other matter directly or indirectly related to employment; or, in recruiting of individuals for employment or in hiring them, to utilize any employment agency that the employer knows or has reasonable cause to know discriminates against individuals because of their race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, because of their previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because the applicant sought and received an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007.

(1) This paragraph does not apply to discrimination governed by Title 39-A, section 353; [PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 476, §1 (AMD).]

B. For any employment agency to fail or refuse to classify properly, refer for employment or otherwise discriminate against any individual because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, because of the individual's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions taken by the individual that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because the individual sought and received an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; or to comply with an employer's request for the referral of job applicants if a request indicates either directly or indirectly that the employer will not afford full and equal employment opportunities to individuals regardless of their race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, because of previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because the individual sought and received an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; [PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 476, §1 (AMD).]

C. For any labor organization to exclude from apprenticeship or membership or to deny full and equal membership rights to any applicant for membership because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, because of the applicant's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions taken by the applicant that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because the applicant sought and received an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; or, because of those reasons, to deny a member full and equal membership rights, expel from membership, penalize or otherwise discriminate with respect to hire, tenure, promotion, transfer, compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment, representation, grievances or any other matter directly or indirectly related to membership or employment, whether or not authorized or required by the constitution or bylaws of that labor organization or by a collective labor agreement or other contract; to fail or refuse to classify properly or refer for employment or otherwise discriminate against any member because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age,

ancestry, national origin or familial status, because of the member's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions taken by the member that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because the applicant sought and received an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; or to cause or attempt to cause an employer to discriminate against an individual in violation of this section, except that it is lawful for labor organizations and employers to adopt a maximum age limitation in apprenticeship programs, if the employer or labor organization obtains prior approval from the Maine Human Rights Commission of any maximum age limitation employed in an apprenticeship program. The commission shall approve the age limitation if a reasonable relationship exists between the maximum age limitation employed and a legitimate expectation of the employer in receiving a reasonable return upon the employer's investment in an apprenticeship program. The employer or labor organization bears the burden of demonstrating that such a relationship exists; [PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 476, §1 (AMD).]

D. For any employer, employment agency or labor organization, prior to employment or admission to membership of any individual, to:

- (1) Elicit or attempt to elicit information directly or indirectly pertaining to race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or any previous actions seeking and receiving an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007;
- (2) Make or keep a record of race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or any previous actions seeking and receiving an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007, except that, in relation to physical or mental disability, when an employer requires a physical or mental examination prior to employment, a privileged record of that examination is permissible if made and kept in compliance with this Act;
- (3) Use any form of application for employment, or personnel or membership blank containing questions or entries directly or indirectly pertaining to race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or any previous actions seeking and receiving an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007. This section does not prohibit any officially recognized government agency from keeping records permitted to be kept under this Act in order to provide free services to individuals requesting rehabilitation or employment assistance;
- (4) Print, publish or cause to be printed or published any notice or advertisement relating to employment or membership indicating any preference, limitation, specification or discrimination based upon race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin or familial status, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or any previous actions seeking and receiving an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; or
- (5) Establish, announce or follow a policy of denying or limiting, through a quota system or otherwise, employment or membership opportunities of any group because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry,

national origin or familial status, because of the previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A, because of previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter 5-B or because of any previous actions seeking and receiving an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007, of that group; or [PL 2021, c. 293, Pt. B, §2 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 476, §1 (AMD).]

E. For an employer, employment agency or labor organization to discriminate in any manner against individuals because they have opposed a practice that would be a violation of this Act or because they have made a charge, testified or assisted in any investigation, proceeding or hearing under this Act. This paragraph does not limit the liability of persons pursuant to section 4633. [PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 293, Pt. B, §2 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 476, §1 (AMD).]

2. Unlawful discrimination against qualified individual with a disability. A covered entity may not discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability because of the disability of the individual in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. A qualified individual with a disability, by reason of that disability, may not be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of a public covered entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such covered entity relating to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

A. The prohibition of this subsection against discrimination includes medical examinations and inquiries. [PL 1995, c. 393, §13 (NEW).]

B. Except as provided in paragraph C, a covered entity may not conduct a medical examination or make inquiries of a job applicant as to whether the applicant is an individual with a disability or as to the nature or severity of the disability. A covered entity may make preemployment inquiries into the ability of an applicant to perform job-related functions. [PL 1995, c. 393, §13 (NEW).]

C. A covered entity may require a medical examination after an offer of employment has been made to a job applicant and prior to the commencement of the employment duties of the applicant and may condition an offer of employment on the results of the examination, if:

- (1) All entering employees are subjected to the same examination regardless of disability;
- (2) Any medical and disability information and history of the applicant is collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and is treated as a confidential medical record, except that:
 - (a) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations;
 - (b) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the disability might require emergency treatment; and
 - (c) Government officials investigating compliance with this Act are provided relevant information on request; and
- (3) The results of the examination are used only in accordance with this Act. [PL 2019, c. 667, Pt. A, §7 (AMD).]

D. A covered entity may not require a medical examination and may not make inquiries of an employee as to whether the employee is an individual with a disability or as to the nature or severity of the disability, unless the examination or inquiry is shown to be job-related and consistent with business necessity. [PL 1995, c. 393, §13 (NEW).]

E. A covered entity may conduct voluntary medical examinations, including voluntary medical and disability information and history, that are part of an employee health or wellness program available to employees at that work site. A covered entity may make inquiries into the ability of an employee to perform job-related functions. Information obtained under this paragraph regarding the medical and disability information and history of an employee is subject to the requirements of paragraph C, subparagraphs (2) and (3). [PL 2019, c. 667, Pt. A, §8 (AMD).]

F. For purposes of this subsection, a test to determine the illegal use of drugs may not be considered a medical examination.

(1) A covered entity:

(a) May prohibit the illegal use of drugs and the use of alcohol at the workplace by all employees;

(b) May require that employees may not be under the influence of alcohol or be engaging in the illegal use of drugs at the workplace;

(c) May require that employees behave in conformance with the requirements established under the federal Drug-free Workplace Act of 1988, 41 United States Code, Section 701 et seq.; and

(d) May hold an employee who engages in the illegal use of drugs or who is an alcoholic to the same qualification standards for employment or job performance and behavior to which that entity holds other employees, even if any unsatisfactory performance or behavior is related to the drug use or alcoholism of the employee; provided that an employer shall make reasonable accommodation to an alcoholic or drug user who is seeking treatment or has successfully completed treatment. [PL 1995, c. 393, §13 (NEW).]

[PL 2019, c. 667, Pt. A, §§7, 8 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1971, c. 501, §1 (NEW). PL 1973, c. 347, §6 (AMD). PL 1973, c. 705, §6 (AMD). PL 1975, c. 355, §6 (RPR). PL 1975, c. 358, §§7-10 (AMD). PL 1975, c. 770, §33 (RPR). PL 1977, c. 565 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 55, §1 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 559, §B2 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 782, §1 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 251, §1 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 99, §7 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 885, §E7 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 885, §E47 (AFF). PL 1995, c. 393, §§12,13 (AMD). PL 2005, c. 10, §§11,12 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 667, Pt. A, §§7, 8 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 293, Pt. B, §2 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 366, §5 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 476, §1 (AMD).

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