

Policy 4030: Nondiscrimination In Employment

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 05/01/2016 | Last Revised Date: 06/01/2025 | Last Reviewed Date: 06/01/2025

CSBA NOTE: The following Board policy and accompanying administrative regulation are mandated pursuant to 2 CCR 11023. In accordance with various provisions of state and federal law and regulation, and related court cases, discrimination by district and district employees against employees and job applicants is unlawful when it is based on certain actual or perceived characteristics of an individual. This includes, but is not limited to discrimination based on race or ethnicity; ancestry; color; ethnic group identification; nationality; national origin; immigration status; sex; sexual orientation; sex stereotypes; gender; gender identity; gender expression; religion; religious creed; age; disability; medical condition; genetic information; pregnancy, false pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or related conditions or recovery; reproductive health decision-making; breastfeeding or related medical conditions; and parental, marital, and family status.

Government Code 12920 and 12926, as amended by SB 1137 (Ch. 779, Statutes of 2024), provide that prohibited discrimination includes discrimination not just because of one protected class under state law, but also because of the combination of two or more protected bases. Pursuant to Government Code 12940, these protections apply to employees, job applicants, persons who serve in an unpaid internship or other limited-duration program to gain unpaid work experience, volunteers, and independent contractors.

Additionally, protections are available under various provisions of federal law, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d-2000d-7), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000e-2000e-17), the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (42 USC 2000gg-2000gg-6), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC 1681-1688), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC 12101-12213), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (42 USC 2000ff-2000ff-11).

For more information regarding sexual harassment of and by employees, see BP/AR 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment, and regarding Title IX sexual harassment complaint procedures, see AR/E(1) 4119.12/4219.12/4319.12 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.

The Governing Board is determined to provide a safe, positive environment where all district employees are assured of full and equal employment access and opportunities, protection from harassment and intimidation, and freedom from any fear of reprisal or retribution for asserting their employment rights in accordance with law. For purposes of this policy and accompanying administrative regulation, employees include interns, volunteers, contractors, job applicants, and other persons with an employment relationship with the district.

No district employee shall be discriminated against or harassed by any coworker, supervisor, manager, or other person with whom the employee comes in contact in the course of employment, on the basis of one, or a combination of two or more, protected characteristics which include, but may not be limited to, the employee's actual or perceived race or ethnicity; ancestry; color; ethnic group identification; nationality; national origin; immigration status; sex; sexual orientation; sex stereotypes; gender; gender identity; gender expression; religion; religious creed; age; disability; medical condition; genetic information; pregnancy, false pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or related conditions or recovery; reproductive health decision-making; breastfeeding or related medical conditions; and parental, marital, and family status; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. (Education Code 200, 210.1, 210.2, 212, 212.1, 220, 230, 260; Government Code 11135, 12920, 12926, 12940; 20 USC 1681-1688, 29 USC 621, 42 USC 2000d-2000d-7, 2000e-2)

CSBA NOTE: 2 CCR 11028 prohibits inquiry into an employee's immigration status or discrimination on the basis of such status, unless the district provides clear and convincing evidence that such inquiry is necessary to comply with federal immigration law. It is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel as necessary.

The district shall not inquire into any employee's immigration status nor discriminate against an employee on the basis of immigration status, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that such inquiry is necessary to comply with federal immigration law. (2 CCR 11028)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Government Code 12954, the district may not discriminate against an employee based on the person's use of cannabis, as described below. However, Government Code 12954 does not preempt state or federal laws requiring applicants to be tested for controlled substances as a condition of employment or to applicants in the building and construction trades or for positions requiring a federal background investigation.

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The Governing Board is determined to provide a safe, positive environment where all district employees are assured of full and equal employment access and opportunities, protection from harassment and intimidation, and freedom from any fear of reprisal or retribution for asserting their employment rights in accordance with law. For purposes of this policy, employees include job applicants, interns, volunteers, and persons who contracted with the district to provide services, as applicable.

No district employee shall be discriminated against or harassed by any coworker, supervisor, manager, or other person with whom the employee comes in contact in the course of employment, on the basis of the employee's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, age, religious creed, marital status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

The district shall not inquire into any employee's immigration status nor discriminate against an employee on the basis of immigration status, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that it is necessary to comply with federal immigration law. (2 CCR 11028)

Discrimination in employment based on the characteristics listed above is prohibited in all areas of employment and in all employment-related practices, including the following:

1. Discrimination in hiring, compensation, terms, conditions, and other privileges of employment
2. Taking of an adverse employment action, such as termination or the denial of employment, promotion, job assignment, or training
3. Unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is so severe or pervasive as to adversely affect an employee's employment opportunities, or that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment
4. Actions and practices identified as unlawful or discriminatory pursuant to Government Code 12940 or 2 CCR 11006-11086, such as:
 - a. Sex discrimination based on an employee's pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or any related medical condition or on an employee's gender, gender expression, or gender identity, including transgender status
 - b. Religious creed discrimination based on an employee's religious belief or observance, including religious dress or grooming practices, or based on the district's failure or refusal to use reasonable means to accommodate an employee's religious belief, observance, or practice which conflicts with an employment requirement
 - c. Requirement for a medical or psychological examination of a job applicant, or an inquiry into whether a job applicant has a mental or physical disability or a medical condition or as to the severity of any such disability or condition, without the showing of a job-related need or business necessity
 - d. Failure to make reasonable accommodation for the known physical or mental disability of an employee, or to engage in a timely, good faith, interactive process with an employee who has requested such accommodations in order to determine the effective reasonable accommodations, if any, to be provided to the employee

The Board also prohibits retaliation against any district employee who opposes any discriminatory employment practice by the district or its employees, agents, or representatives or who complains, testifies, assists, or in any way participates in the district's complaint process pursuant to this policy. No employee who requests an accommodation for any protected characteristic listed in this policy shall be subjected to any punishment or sanction, regardless of whether the request was granted. (Government Code 12940; 2 CCR 11028)

No employee shall, in exchange for a raise or bonus or as a condition of employment or continued employment, be

It is recommended that districts with questions about employee cannabis use or screening consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel. Also see BP 4111 - Recruitment and Selection, AR 4112.5 - Criminal Record Check, BP/AR 4118 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action, and BP/AR 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action.

In addition, unless otherwise provided for in law, the district may not discriminate against an employee in any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize a person, including termination, based on the person's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace, or on a drug screening which finds that the person has nonpsychoactive cannabis metabolites in the person's hair, blood, urine, or other bodily fluid. However, the district retains the right to maintain drug-free schools or prohibit employees from possessing, being impaired by, or using cannabis while on the job. (Government Code 12954)

CSBA NOTE: The following items illustrate unlawful discriminatory practices as specified in Government Code 12940.

Labor Code 1197.5 prohibits the payment of different wage rates to employees for similar work based on sex, race, or ethnicity and prohibits the use of prior salary history by itself to justify any disparity in compensation under the bona fide factor exception. Labor Code 1197.5 creates a rebuttable presumption in favor of the employee's claim if a district retaliates against an employee within 90 days of the specified protected activity.

Discrimination in employment based on the characteristics listed above is prohibited in all areas of employment and in all employment-related practices, including the following:

1. Hiring, compensation, terms, conditions, and other privileges of employment

CSBA NOTE: When disciplining an employee, the district must ensure that all the surrounding facts and circumstances are considered and analyzed within the parameters of any applicable constitutional or legal framework.

In *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the district could not discipline an employee for non-coercive religious conduct while the employee was acting as a private citizen. Also see BP 4118 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action, BP 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action, and BP 4119.1/4219.1/4319.1 - Civil and Legal Rights.

In *Groff v. DeJoy*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that Title VII's protections against religious discrimination require an employer who denies an employee's religious accommodation to show that the burden of granting the accommodation would result in substantial increased costs in relation to the conduct of its particular business.

Since employee discipline, especially with respect to suspension and dismissal, involves complex legal considerations, it is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel, accordingly.

2. Taking adverse employment actions such as termination or denial of employment, promotion, job assignment, or training
3. Unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is offensive and so severe or pervasive as to adversely affect an employee's employment opportunities or that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

CSBA NOTE: Item #4 below lists some, but not all, specific practices prohibited under Government Code 12940 or 2 CCR 11006-11086 in relation to certain protected categories. For example, because "sex" as defined in Government Code 12926 includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions, any of these conditions may be the basis for an employee's sex discrimination claim. As the specific prohibitions are too numerous to list in policy, it is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel when questions arise as to any specific claim.

4. Actions and practices identified as unlawful or discriminatory pursuant to Government Code 12940 or 2 CCR 11006-11086, such as:
 - a. Sex discrimination based on one, or a combination of two or more protected characteristics, which include, but may not be limited to, an employee's pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or any related medical condition, or on an employee's gender, gender expression, gender identity, or sexual orientation

- b. Religious creed discrimination based on an employee's religious belief, observance, and practice, including religious dress or grooming practices, or based on the district's failure or refusal to use reasonable means to accommodate an employee's religious belief, observance, or practice which conflicts with an employment requirement
- c. Requiring medical or psychological examination of a job applicant or making an inquiry into whether a job applicant has a mental or physical disability or a medical condition or as to the severity of any such disability or condition, without the showing of a job-related need or business necessity
- d. Failure to make reasonable accommodation for the known physical or mental disability of an employee or to engage in a timely, good faith, interactive process with an employee who has requested such accommodations in order to determine the effective reasonable accommodations, if any, to be provided to the employee
- e. Requiring an employee to disclose information relating to the employee's reproductive health decision-making

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Government Code 12940, as amended by SB 1100 (Ch. 877, Statutes of 2024), it is an unlawful employment practice for the district to include a statement in a job advertisement, posting, application, or other material that an applicant is required to have a driver's license, unless both of the conditions specified below are satisfied.

- f. Including a statement in a job advertisement, posting, application, or other material that an applicant is required to have a driver's license, unless the district reasonably expects driving to be one of the job functions for the position and reasonably believes that satisfying the job function using an alternative form of transportation would not be comparable in travel time or cost to the district

CSBA NOTE: Retaliation against complainants or other participants in the grievance procedures is prohibited by Government Code 12940 and 34 CFR 110.34. In addition to the general prohibition against retaliation, Government Code 12940 provides that an employee who requests accommodation for a physical or mental disability or religious belief is protected from retaliation as specified below. CSBA recommends that this protection be extended to all protected characteristics, as provided below.

The Board also prohibits retaliation against any district employee who opposes any discriminatory employment practice by the district or its employees, agents, or representatives or who complains, reports an incident, testifies, assists, or in any way participates in the district's complaint process pursuant to this policy. No employee who requests an accommodation for any protected characteristic listed in this policy shall be subjected to any punishment or sanction, regardless of whether the request was granted. (Government Code 12940; 2 CCR 11028)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Government Code 12964.5, the district is prohibited from requiring an employee, in exchange for a raise or bonus or as a condition of employment or continued employment, to sign a nondisparagement agreement or similar document that would deny the employee the right to disclose information about unlawful acts in the workplace or requiring an employee to release the right to file a claim or civil action against the district.

Pursuant to Government Code 12964.5, the above prohibition applies not only to claims or complaints of sexual harassment or sexual assault, but to those involving harassment or discrimination based on any protected characteristic and to other unlawful employment practices under the Fair Employment and Housing Act.

No employee shall, in exchange for a raise or bonus or as a condition of employment or continued employment, be required to sign a release of the employee's claim or right to file a claim against the district or a nondisparagement agreement or other document that has the purpose or effect of preventing the employee from disclosing information about harassment, discrimination, or other unlawful acts in the workplace, including any conduct that the employee has reasonable cause to believe is unlawful. (Government Code 12964.5)

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to 2 CCR 11019, in certain instances, an employee's (especially a supervisor's) knowledge or notice of prohibited conduct of another employee or individual may subject the district to liability. Therefore, it is recommended that the district require its employees with knowledge of harassment or discrimination to report the incident to the appropriate district authorities. In addition, Government Code 12940 provides that a district may be responsible for harassment of employees by nonemployees when the district knows or should have known of the conduct and failed to take immediate and corrective action, taking into consideration the extent of the district's control and other legal responsibility that the district may have with respect to the conduct of those nonemployees. Also see BP/AR 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment.

required to sign any document that releases the employee's right to file a claim against the district or to disclose information about harassment or other unlawful employment practices. (Government Code 12964.5)

Complaints concerning employment discrimination, harassment, or retaliation shall immediately be investigated in accordance with procedures specified in the accompanying administrative regulation.

Any supervisory or management employee who observes or has knowledge of an incident of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including harassment of an employee by a nonemployee, shall report the incident to the Superintendent or designated district coordinator as soon as practical after the incident. All other employees are encouraged to report such incidents to their supervisor immediately. The district shall protect any employee who reports such incidents from retaliation.

The Superintendent or designee shall use all appropriate means to reinforce the district's nondiscrimination policy, including providing training and information to employees about how to recognize harassment, discrimination, or other related conduct, how to respond appropriately, and components of the district's policies and regulations regarding discrimination. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review the district's employment practices and, as necessary, shall take action to ensure district compliance with the nondiscrimination laws.

Any district employee who engages in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation or who aids, abets, incites, compels, or coerces another to engage or attempt to engage in such behavior in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

See the accompanying administrative regulation for requirements related to the identification of the employee who will be responsible for compliance with nondiscrimination laws.

The following paragraph should be revised to reflect the district's timeline.

Any supervisory or management employee who observes or has knowledge of an incident of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including harassment of an employee by a nonemployee, shall report the incident to the Superintendent or designated district coordinator within one workday. All other employees shall report such incidents to their supervisor or designated district coordinator within one workday.

CSBA NOTE: Government Code 12940 and 2 CCR 11023 require districts to take all reasonable steps to prevent prohibited discrimination and harassment, including, but not limited to, dissemination of the district's policy on the prevention of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Government Code 12950 and 2 CCR 11049 require districts to post, in prominent and accessible locations on district premises, posters developed by the California Civil Rights Department (CRD), formerly the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, which are available on CRD's website.

For further information on prevention strategies, including posting requirements, see the accompanying administrative regulation.

The Superintendent or designee shall use all appropriate means to reinforce the district's nondiscrimination policy, including providing training and information to employees about how to recognize harassment, discrimination, or other prohibited conduct, how to respond appropriately, and components of the district's policies and regulations regarding discrimination. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review the district's employment practices and, as necessary, shall take action to ensure district compliance with the nondiscrimination laws.

Any district employee who engages in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation or who aids, abets, incites, compels, or coerces another to engage or attempt to engage in such behavior in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

CSBA NOTE: 2 CCR 11023 requires a district's policy to include a complaint process for complaints concerning employment discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, with specified requirements; see the accompanying administrative regulation. However, the complaint procedures specified in the Title IX regulations (34 CFR 106.44-106.45, as added by 85 Fed.Reg. 30026) are required to be used to address any complaint of sexual harassment, as defined in 34 CFR 106.30, based on conduct that occurred between August 14, 2020 and July 31, 2024, and after January 9, 2025. For complaints initiated between August 1, 2024 and January 9, 2025, it is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel.

For more information regarding sexual harassment of and by employees, see BP/AR 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment, and for the Title IX grievance procedures, see AR 4119.12/4219.12/4319.12 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.

Complaints concerning employment discrimination, harassment, or retaliation shall immediately be investigated in accordance with procedures specified in the accompanying administrative regulation. However, complaints alleging sexual harassment under Title IX shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with the procedures specified in Administrative Regulation 4119.12/4219.12/4319.12 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.

CSBA NOTE: Government Code 12946 makes it an unlawful employment practice for a district to fail to maintain certain records and files for employees and terminated employees, as provided in the following paragraph.

The district shall maintain and preserve all applications, personnel, membership, or employment referral records and files for at least four years after the records are initially created or received or, for an applicant or a terminated employee, for four years after the date the employment action was taken. However, when the district is notified that a complaint has been filed with the California Civil Rights Department, records related to the employee involved shall be maintained and preserved until the later of the first date after the time for filing a civil action has expired or the first date after the complaint has been fully and finally disposed of and all administrative proceedings, civil actions, appeals, or related proceedings have been terminated. (Government Code 12946)

