Employment Nondiscrimination Protections for State Employees

No updates required since April 30, 2021

Note:
As a result of a June 2020 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia, employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity is illegal under Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act. As a result of this ruling, LGBTQ people across the country can continue to file complaints with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and seek recourse for discrimination in the workplace through federal courts. However, some states also have explicit laws against employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and these are reported below. These state laws remain important so that LGBTQ people are protected against discrimination at every level of government, and because they are often passed alongside additional protections not yet enshrined in federal law, such as protections against discrimination in public places.

Alabama
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Alaska
- State agency explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity. See Alaska State Commission for Human Rights (2020), including agency social media posts.

Arizona
- State attorney general explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity. See Arizona Attorney General’s court filing in Bruer vs. The State of Arizona (2020).
  - Executive Order 2003-22 (2003) prohibits discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation

Arkansas
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

California
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
Colorado
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See CRS §24-34-402. Amended to include sexual orientation (defined to include “transgender status,” see CRS §24-34-301) in 2007 (SB 07-025).

Connecticut
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See CGS Ch. 814c §46a-60. Amended to include sexual orientation in 1991 (HB 7133) and to include gender identity in 2011 (HB 6599).

Delaware
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

District of Columbia
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Florida
- State agency explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity
- See Florida Commission on Human Rights (2020).

Georgia
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Hawai`i
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See HRS §378-2, amended to include sexual orientation in 1991 and to include gender identity in 2011 (HB 546).

Idaho
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Illinois
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See 775 ILCS 5/1-102 (signed into law 2005, effective 2006)
Indiana

- **Workplace Harassment Prevention** policy (2005), resulting from a Governor’s Affirmative Action State (2005), prohibits discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Iowa

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Kansas

- State agency explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity. See Kansas Human Rights Commission’s [Statement on Bostock](https://www.kansasattorneygeneral.gov/civil-rights/kansas-human-rights-commission) (2020).

Kentucky

- [Executive Order 2020-554](https://www.ca.gov.legislature.ky.gov/Order/2020-554) (June 2020) prohibits discrimination in state employment, contracts, and government services based on sexual orientation and gender identity

Louisiana

- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Maine

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Maryland

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See [S.B. 212](https://mglt.maryland.gov/reports/legbill/sb212) (2001 for sexual orientation protection and 2014 for gender identity protection)

Massachusetts

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- [Executive Order 526](https://www.mass.gov/content/executive-order-526) prohibits discrimination in state employment and by state contractors based on sexual orientation and gender identity (2011).
Michigan

- Directive 2019-9 (2019) expanded protections to include all state employees (classified and unclassified); employees of all recipients of state contracts, grants, and loans; and prohibiting discrimination in state services.

Minnesota

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Mississippi

- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Missouri


Montana

- Executive Order No. 04-2016 (2016) prohibits discrimination in state employment and contracts based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Nebraska

- State agency explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity
- See Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission’s statement (2020).

Nevada

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

New Hampshire

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See HB 421 (1997) for sexual orientation and HB 1319 (2018) for gender identity

New Jersey

- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See N.J. Stat. § 10:5-4, and 10:5-12 amended to include sexual orientation in 1992 and amended to include gender identity in 2007
New Mexico
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

New York
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
  - See SB 720 (2002) for sexual orientation and SB 1047 (2019) for gender identity

North Carolina
- Executive Order 24 (2017) prohibits discrimination in state employment and contracts based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression

North Dakota
- State agency explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity
  - See North Dakota Department of Labor and Human Rights statement (2020)

Ohio
- Executive Order 2011-05K (2011) prohibited discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation only. This EO was rescinded by Gov. Kasich and replaced by EO 2018-12K (protecting both sexual orientation and gender identity).

Oklahoma
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Oregon
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Pennsylvania
- Executive Order 2016-04 (2016) prohibits discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.
- Executive Order 2016-05 (2016) prohibits discrimination by state contractors based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.
Rhode Island
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity
- See Rhode Island Stat. § 28-5-7, amended in 1995 to include sexual orientation and amended in 2001 to include gender identity.

South Carolina
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

South Dakota
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Tennessee
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Texas
- Texas 5th Circuit Court of Appeals explicitly interprets existing protections against discrimination based on sex to include both sexual orientation and gender identity

Utah
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Vermont
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates sexual orientation and gender identity

Virginia
- Formerly, Executive Order 1 (2014) prohibited discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and Executive Order 61 (2017) prohibited discrimination in by state contractors based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Washington
West Virginia
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Wisconsin
- Employment nondiscrimination law enumerates only sexual orientation, though federal law offers protections for gender identity (see note).
- See Wis. Stat. § 111.321, § 111.322, and § 111.36 (1982).

Wyoming
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

U.S. Territories

American Samoa
- No employment nondiscrimination policy enumerating sexual orientation or gender identity, though federal law offers protections (see note)

Guam

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- Discrimination by the Commonwealth government and Marianas Visitors Authority prohibited based on sexual orientation (2013).

Puerto Rico

U.S. Virgin Islands
- The Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands does not permit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity and accepts complaints from government employees of discrimination on those bases (Revised Sexual Harassment Policy, 2013).

---

MAP previously relied, in part, on “A State-by-State Examination of Nondiscrimination Laws and Policies,” by Jerome Hunt, Center for American Progress Action Fund, June 2012.