

Employment Discrimination: What You Need to Know to Protect Your Rights

All employees have basic rights in the workplace — including the right to privacy, fair compensation, and freedom from employment discrimination. A job applicant also has certain rights even prior to being hired as an employee. Those rights include the right to be free from discrimination based on age, gender, race, national origin, or religion during the hiring process. Some important employee rights include:

- The right to a safe work environment, free from undue dangers
- The right to a degree of privacy in your personal matters
- The right not to be discriminated against on grounds of your age, race, national origin, gender, ethnicity, pregnancy, religion, or disability
- The right not to be discriminated against on the basis of marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation and other characteristics
- The right to fair pay, meaning at least a minimum wage, plus overtime for any hours worked over 40 hours a week or, in some places, over 8 hours a day
- The right to a workplace environment with no harassment
- The right to take time from work to tend to your own, or a family member's, illness
- The right to take leave following the birth of a child

If you feel that your workplace rights have been violated, you should take the following steps:

1. Talk to Your Employer

The first thing that you should do once you believe that your workplace rights have been violated is to talk to your employer about the situation. However, there are still occasions when an employer can be truly antagonistic and uncaring about the rights of workers. Be informed of your rights and stay detached when meeting with your employer.

2. Keep Track of All Records

Be sure to keep copies of everything for your own records. Take notes of important conversations that you have regarding the situation. Remember to include important details such as the date, time, place and names of people who took part in the conversation. Also, gather any documents that you think may be relevant such as e-mails, employee handbooks, letters, company policy statements and others.

3. Speak With an Employment Discrimination Attorney

If you have spoken with your employer and you still feel that nothing has been done to address your workplace rights, it may be time to consider taking legal action. There are time limits for taking legal action to protect your workplace rights. An experienced attorney can help navigate the complicated legal issues and deadlines involved. If you've been the victim of employment discrimination, it's important that you seek the advice of an experienced workplace discrimination attorney to protect your rights and help get you the compensation that you deserve!