



Roundup: US employer resources on hairstyle nondiscrimination laws

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The Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Act movement in the US aims to prohibit discrimination based on natural hair texture or hairstyles that are normally associated with race, such as braids, locs, twists, curls, cornrows, afros, head wraps or bantu knots. The [official campaign](#) of the CROWN Act is led by the CROWN Coalition. Twelve states have already passed CROWN Acts; many others are considering legislation, and federal legislation is also being considered. To help employers ensure their employee handbooks and appearance policies are nondiscriminatory and in compliance with federal, state and local laws, this roundup provides links to federal and state resources from organizations, government websites, third-party resources and news articles.

Federal

Existing federal law prohibits some forms of hair discrimination as a type of racial, religious or national origin discrimination, but some federal courts have narrowly construed these protections. The CROWN Act (HR 5309), which banned discrimination based on hair textures and hairstyles that are commonly associated with a particular race or national origin, was passed in the House of Representatives in September 2020 during the last congressional session and received in the Senate — but did not pass. In March 2021, the CROWN Act legislation bill was reintroduced in the House and Senate.

- [Sen. Booker, Rep. Watson-Coleman reintroduce the CROWN Act](#) (Cory Booker, March 27, 2021)
- [HR 2116 — a bill to prohibit discrimination based on an individual's texture or style of hair](#) (Congress, March 19, 2021)
- [Reps. Pressley, Watson Coleman, Lee, Omar, Moore seek support from VP Harris on passage of CROWN Act in both chambers this Congress](#) (Rep. Ayanna Pressley, March 22, 2021)
- [Diversity in the works: The CROWN Act — A root to end overview for employers on hair discrimination laws and the impact on employer grooming codes](#) (Ford Harrison, March 1, 2021)

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- [Untangling discrimination: The CROWN Act and protecting black hair](#) (University of Cincinnati Law Review, February 2021)
- [The CROWN Act makes waves across the country to end hair discrimination](#) (Forbes, Jan. 13, 2021)
- [Research suggests bias against natural hair limits job opportunities for black women](#) (Duke School of Business, Aug. 12, 2020)
- [Religious garb and grooming in the workplace: Rights and responsibilities](#) (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), March 6, 2014)
- [Appearance and grooming standards](#) (EEOC, April 19, 2006)

States

Currently, twelve states have enacted CROWN legislation (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Virginia and Washington), and numerous other states are currently considering the legislation.

- [The CROWN Act looks to protect hair styles from discrimination](#) (Multistate, April 14, 2021)
- [Which states have considered CROWN Act legislation in their 2021 sessions?](#) (Multistate, April 13, 2021)
- [Protecting our crowns: More states signing the CROWN act into law](#) (The Source, March 15, 2021)
- [8 states across the US that have banned hair discrimination](#) (Global Citizen, March 5, 2021)

California

- [A heads up on the CROWN Act: Employees' natural hairstyles now protected](#) (The National Law Review, Aug. 22, 2019)
- [California becomes first state to outlaw hair discrimination](#) (GovDocs, July 25, 2019)
- [California employers can't discriminate based on hair](#) (Mercer, July 11, 2019)

Colorado

- [Colorado employers cannot discriminate based on hair](#) (Mercer, Aug. 10, 2020)

Connecticut

- [Pub. Act No. 21-2](#) (Connecticut General Assembly, March 4, 2021)
- [New Connecticut CROWN Act bans natural hair discrimination in the workplace](#) (Jackson Lewis, March 15, 2021)

Delaware

- [2021 Ch. 13](#) (Delaware General Assembly, April 13, 2021)
- [Delaware's hair discrimination law in effect](#) (GovDocs, April 19, 2021)

Maryland

- [MD State Gov't Code Ann. § 20-101](#) (Maryland General Assembly)
- [Maryland among growing number of states with hair discrimination law](#) (GovDocs, July 9, 2020)

Nebraska

- [Bill 451](#) (Legislature, May 5, 2021)

Nevada

- [SB 327](#) (Legislature, June 2, 2021)

New Jersey

- [New Jersey employers cannot discriminate based on hair](#) (Mercer, Jan. 16, 2020)
- [New Jersey bans discrimination based on hair type, style](#) (Mercer, Dec. 27, 2019)

New York

- [New York bans discrimination based on religious clothing, facial hair](#) (Mercer, Aug. 19, 2019)
- [New York governor signs law prohibiting hairstyle discrimination](#) (Fisher Phillips, Aug. 9, 2019)

Oregon

- [HB 2935](#) (Legislature, June 11, 2021)
- [Oregon enacts employment protections for hairstyles and other physical characteristics historically associated with race](#) (Ogletree Deakins, June 16, 2021)

Virginia

- [VA Code Ann. § 2.2-3901](#) (Virginia's legislative information system)
- [Virginia passes hair discrimination act](#) (GovDocs, March 11, 2020)

Washington

- [WA Rev. Code § 49.60.040](#) (Washington State Legislature)

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- [Governor signs Morgan bill to prohibit hair discrimination](#) (Rep. Melanie Morgan, March 19, 2020)
- [Washington amends its law against discrimination to provide protections for hair textures and styles as traits associated with 'race'](#) (Ogletree Deakins, April 7, 2020)

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