



Roundup: US employer resources on hairstyle nondiscrimination laws

*By Stephanie Rosseau and Fiona Webster
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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. Federal legislation, supported by the Biden administration, passed the house in March 2022. Eighteen states have already passed CROWN Acts, and many others are considering legislation. 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 2116), which bans discrimination based on hair textures and hairstyles that are commonly associated with a particular race or national origin, passed the House of Representatives on March 18, 2022 by a 235-189 vote and will now be considered by the Senate. The Biden administration has endorsed the legislation, saying it would “bolster the strength of our economy and advance equal opportunity for all Americans.”

- [HR 2116](#) (Congress, March 18, 2022)
- [Dove and the CROWN coalition applaud the US House of Representatives for passing the CROWN Act](#) (The CROWN coalition, March 21, 2022)
- [Hands off my CROWN! What employers should know about the rise of hair discrimination laws](#) (Littler, April 27, 2022)
- [Yes, we need a law protecting Black people against hair discrimination](#) (The Washington Post, April 11, 2022)

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- [The CROWN Act highlights years of workplace hair discrimination finally being legally reprehensible](#) (Fortune, March 21, 2022)
- [Booker applauds bipartisan vote in house to pass CROWN Act](#) (Cory Booker, March 18, 2022)
- [US house passes CROWN Act that would ban race-based hair discrimination](#) (CNN, March 18, 2022)
- [With House passage of the CROWN Act, Black natural hairstyles move closer to federal protection](#) (Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, March 18, 2022)
- [US House passes bill preventing race-based hair discrimination](#) (Jurist, March 18, 2022)
- [House passes Crown Act banning discrimination against Black hairstyles](#) (NBC, March 18, 2022)
- [Statement of administration policy](#) (Executive Office of the President, March 15, 2022)
- [The house tried to pass a bill banning race-based discrimination against Black people based on how they wear their hair. Nearly all Republicans voted no.](#) (Politico, March 1, 2022)
- [Republican obstructionists delay passage of the CROWN Act](#) (Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman, Feb. 28, 2022).
- [Bill banning Black hairstyle discrimination fails House vote](#) (Bloomberg Law, Feb. 28, 2022)
- [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)
- [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, eighteen states have enacted CROWN legislation (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Virginia and Washington), and the Virgin Islands. Numerous other states are considering the legislation.

- [More states to consider bills to prohibit discrimination against Black hair](#) (Pew, March 31, 2022)
- [Everything you need to know about the CROWN Act](#) (Byrdie, Jan. 5, 2022)
- [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)

Illinois

- [Public Act 102-1102](#) (Legislature)

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- [Illinois enacts law banning racial discrimination based on hairstyle or hair texture](#) (Ogletree Deakins, July 7, 2022)
- [Governor Pritzker Signs CROWN Act into law protecting against hair discrimination](#) (Governor's office, June 29, 2022)

Louisiana

- [HB 1083](#) (Legislature, June 16, 2023)
- [Louisiana joins growing list of states prohibiting hairstyle discrimination](#) (Ogletree Deakins, June 29, 2022)

Maine

- [LD 598](#) (Legislature, April 20, 2022)
- [Gov. Mills signs Sen. Daughtry's bill to protect Mainers from discrimination based on hair texture or hairstyle](#) (Senate, May 3, 2022)

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)

Massachusetts

- [HB 4554](#) (Legislature)
- [Client Alert: New Massachusetts law prohibits discrimination based on hairstyle](#) (Bowditch, July 29, 2022)
- [Massachusetts becomes latest state to ban discrimination based on hairstyles](#) (CNN, July 26, 2022)
- [Baker signs Crown Act, banning hairstyle discrimination at school, work in Mass.](#) (WBUR, July 26, 2022)

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 Mexico

- [HB 29](#) (Legislature, April 5, 2021)
- [SB 80](#) (Legislature, April 6, 2021)
- [Guv signs bills that protect discrimination for hair and hairstyles](#) (The NM Political Report, April 6, 2021)

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)

Tennessee

- [SB 0136](#) (Legislature, June 1, 2022)
- [Governor of Tennessee signs CROWN Act into law](#) (VensureHR, June 9, 2022)

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)
- [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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