

Employment Discrimination Information & Resources

Due to the complexity of employment discrimination matters, involving both local, state, and federal laws, such questions are beyond the scope of the brief legal advice services that the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinics provide. We can, however, provide you with these helpful resources to assist you with finding the help you may need.

FINDING GOVERNMENT AGENCY HELP ABOUT EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION:

State of Wisconsin: The **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Equal Rights Division (ERD)** enforces Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law, which prohibits discrimination in: recruitment and hiring, job assignments, pay, leave or benefits, promotion, licensing or union membership, training, layoff and firing and other employment related actions based on any of the following protected statuses: age, arrest and/or conviction record, ancestry, color, national origin or race, creed, disability, genetic testing, honesty testing, marital status, military service, pregnancy or childbirth, sex, sexual orientation and use or nonuse of lawful products off the employer's premises during nonworking hours. Under that law, employees may not be harassed in the workplace based on a protected status; and employees may not be retaliated against for filing a complaint, assisting with a complaint, or opposing discrimination in the workplace.

Enforcement is initiated by individuals filing a complaint with the ERD within 300 days from the date the discriminatory action was taken or the individual was made aware the action was taken. The Equal Rights Division is located at 819 N. 6th Street, Room 723, Milwaukee, WI 53203. For more information, call 414-227-4384 or to https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/civil_rights/discrimination/fair_employment.htm

Federal: The **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to unfairly treat (discriminate against) a job applicant or an employee based on any of the following protected statuses: race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. Harassment because of a person's protected status, by managers, co-workers, or others in the workplace, is also prohibited, as is denial of a reasonable workplace accommodation that a person needs because of religious beliefs or disability, and retaliation because a person complained about job discrimination, or assisted with a job discrimination investigation or lawsuit. Most employers with at least 15 employees are covered by federal anti-discrimination laws (20 employees in age discrimination cases). Most labor unions and employment agencies are also covered. Note: Employees should keep in mind that they must exhaust (i.e. go through) the administrative agencies (Equal Rights Division, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, etc.) before they can file a lawsuit in state or federal court.

Enforcement is initiated by individuals filing a charge with the EEOC, generally within 300 days from the date of the discrimination. The EEOC Milwaukee office is located in the Reuss Federal Plaza, 310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 500, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2292. For more information, call 1-800-669-4000 or go to <http://www.eeoc.gov/employees/index.cfm>

Local: Check with your local municipality for any applicable local anti-discrimination law.

FINDING A LAWYER'S HELP REGARDING EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION:

Free legal assistance:

The Eastern District of Wisconsin Pro Se Federal Civil Litigant Help Line offers free, confidential, independent guidance for up to two hours from a lawyer to help you move forward in federal civil litigation in employment discrimination cases. For more information, go to <https://edwba.org> or submit this form: https://edwba.org/form.php?form_id=15.

Voces de la Frontera Saturday Legal Clinic: For those who have basic questions regarding a worker rights matter, this legal clinic is held on some but not all Saturdays from 9:00-11:00am, at Voces de la Frontera 1027 S. 5th St. Milwaukee, WI 53204. For the clinic's schedule, go to <http://vdlf.org/workers-center/legal-help/> or call 414-643-1620. There is no appointment necessary and it is free and open to the public.

I need to hire and can pay for an employment discrimination lawyer:

Milwaukee Bar Association Lawyer Referral & Information Service (LRIS) at 414-274-6768; email at iris@milwbar.org; or <http://findmilwaukeeelawyers.org/>, Monday to Friday, 8:30AM-4:30PM. When receiving a referral from this service, clients are offered an initial consult of ½ hour for no more than \$20.00. After that, the fee is determined by the attorney.

State Bar of Wisconsin Association Lawyer Referral & Information Service (LRIS) at 1-800-362-9082 or <http://www.wisbar.org/forPublic/INeedaLawyer/Pages/LRIS.aspx>. When receiving a referral from this service, clients are offered an initial consult of ½ hour for no more than \$20.00. After that, the fee is determined by the attorney.

Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development, Equal Rights Division Attorney Referral List https://dwd.wi.gov/er/civil_rights/discrimination/attorney_referral_list.htm If you are considering retaining an attorney on the list, you should contact the law firm directly for information about consultation fees, fee arrangements, special services, and other information.

FINDING ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION INFORMATION:

Wisconsin State Law Library: <http://wilawlibrary.gov/topics/laborlaw/employdiscrim.php>

DISCLAIMER: This information is intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal advice or as a substitute for legal advice. If you want legal advice about your specific issue, you must consult an attorney.