

Let's Talk About antisemitism

ANTISEMITISM IN THE WORKPLACE

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Religious discrimination involves treating a person (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of his or her religious beliefs. Religious discrimination can also involve treating someone differently because that person is married to (or associated with) an individual of a particular religion.

The law forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment.

It is also illegal to harass a person because of his or her religion. Harassment can include, for example, offensive remarks about a person's religious beliefs or practices. Harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted). The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

What employers can do:

- Speak up unequivocally in support of Jewish employees and against antisemitism.
- Consider forming voluntary faith-based employee resource groups, either interfaith or specifically for Jewish employees.
- Provide clear guidance about how to respond to inappropriate statements and postings on social media, including content involving antisemitism.
- Have a clear policy about religious accommodations, including whom to contact. Make sure you follow an interactive process and educate and train employees on this policy.
- Specifically address antisemitism in anti-harassment, anti-discrimination and diversity trainings, initiatives and policies.

What employees can do if they experience antisemitism (or other forms of discrimination at work):

- If you feel the other party is reasonable, you can try to address it with them directly. Sometimes people don't realize that something they have said or done is, or may be, offensive and a conversation may take care of the situation.
- Report misconduct to your management or HR (Per Keith Sonderling, Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC): "It's really important now for not just those being subjected to discrimination but others who are seeing it and are aware of it to speak up, to go to HR and to help make sure not only is it stopping, but there are proper systems in place to prevent this from ever occurring.")
- File a charge with the EEOC if other means do not work. (Sonderling: "There are a lot of remedies for you if you've been discriminated against. The EEOC stands ready to investigate those claims.")

- Tips from Society for Human Resource Management