

The 12 Days of California Labor & Employment Series – Day 6: Au Naturel Hair is Always Welcome

1 min read

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It's the end of the year and while everyone is busy, employers in California should be aware of new laws and regulations that go into effect on January 1, 2020. In the spirit of the season, we are using the "12 days of the holidays" to blog daily about one of these new California laws and its impact on California employers. On the sixth day of the holidays, my labor and employment attorney gave to me: six geese a laying and SB 188.

Historically, California has led the way in proactively creating non-discriminatory policies, and SB 188—also known as the CROWN Act (Create a Respectful and Open Workplace for Natural Hair)—is no exception. The CROWN Act, as [we discussed in a blog post earlier this year](#), expands what is considered a protected race category under California's Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) to include traits "historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles."

Over the years, there have been multiple cases of individuals being chastised, fired, or asked to change their appearance because of their natural hair. There have also been instances where an individual was reprimanded or terminated for violating a company policy by wearing protective hair garments or sporting a certain style of hair. All of this is now unlawful conduct in California.



Employers need to assess their grooming and dress code standards to ensure compliance and remove any type of policy that is restrictive in this manner. In addition, employers should take note that this not only applies to current employees, but also to the hiring process.

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