

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut's New Law Changes How Employers Handle Sexual Harassment

The #MeToo ripple effect has reached Connecticut, and employers will soon need to handle harassment issues differently. The law, which goes into effect on October 1, 2019, made several changes to Connecticut's human rights law that employers need to know about.

Workplace Signage and Notification

All employees need to know that sexual harassment is illegal and that there are remedies available if they're victimized. To make that happen, employers with more than three employees must post the information in the workplace and email copies of the policy to them within three months of their hire date. If employees don't have email, they should be directed to the website for the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) either via a link on the company website or through other means. Compliance failure: \$1,000 fine.

Sexual Harassment Training Requirements

All company supervisors must receive sexual harassment training, regardless of company size, and companies with as few as three employees must train them as well by October 1, 2020. Employees who are promoted to supervisory positions after October 1, 2019 should be trained within six months. Periodic retraining is also required. Compliance failure: potential legal liability for 'discriminatory practices' and \$1,000 fine.

Potential Compliance Inspections

The CHRO can inspect your business to ensure notices are properly posted and all documentation is in order.

No Retaliation

To protect employees after they've filed a sexual harassment claim, the Act prohibits retaliation as well as any "corrective actions," such as departmental transfers or relocations, unless the employee agrees in writing to the change. Of course, the employee must not feel obligated or coerced to agree.

Immediate Action Steps for Connecticut Employers

Every employer should:

- Verify that the company's sexual harassment policy is updated or develop one if none exists.
- Post the policy onsite and email it to employees or add a CHRO link to the company website.
- Assign the applicable sexual harassment training (by ePlace Solutions) and begin training as soon as possible. Call us for help, if needed.
- Train managers and supervisors on changes regarding corrective actions and prohibited behavior.