



NEW YORK BANS “HAIR DISCRIMINATION” IN THE WORKPLACE

Publications

01, August 2019

By: Adam D. Miztner

New York State has banned hair discrimination in the workplace. The law, which was signed by Gov.

Andrew Cuomo on July 12 (taking effect immediately), amends the state human rights law by including

“traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles”

in the definition of “race.” The term “protective hairstyles” includes hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.

Companies with New York employees and operations should immediately review their appearance and hair policies to make sure they comply with the new law. Those policies should use neutral, generally-applicable language and should not single out hair textures or hairstyles that are associated with African-Americans or any other racial group.

New York City has issued its own guidance on hair discrimination, which is more detailed and broader in

scope than its state counterpart: it applies not only to hairstyles associated with race, but also to hairstyles

associated with ethnicity and culture. The New York City guidance also provides a litany of unlawful

appearance and grooming policies and practices.

About Pavia & Harcourt LLP

Established in 1951, Pavia & Harcourt LLP is a business law firm concentrating in commercial, corporate, banking, media and entertainment, real estate, litigation and arbitration, intellectual property, and estate planning and administration. We are based in New York City.

Contacting Pavia & Harcourt LLP

Questions regarding matters discussed in this publication may be directed to the author, Adam Mitzner (amitzner@pavialaw.com; +1 (212) 508-2318), or to any other Pavia & Harcourt lawyer with whom you may have consulted previously. Contact information for all our attorneys is available on our website, www.pavialaw.com.

This publication by Pavia & Harcourt LLP is for information purposes only. It does not constitute legal or other professional advice or opinions on specific facts or matters, nor does its distribution establish an attorney-client relationship. This material may constitute Attorney Advertising as defined by the New York Court Rules. As required by New York law, we hereby advise you that prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.

RELATED SERVICES

Labor & Employment

RELATED PROFESSIONALS



ADAM D. MITZNER

Partner

 212.980.3500