

New York Partner Explains Impact of State's New Anti-Discrimination Laws on Employers

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Two new state laws in New York will protect employees from job discrimination, allowing them to wear their hair and clothing in ways that are a part of their cultural or spiritual being. Among the protected styles are natural hair textures, braids and dreadlocks, and facial hair and clothing worn in accordance with an employee's religion, such as turbans, yarmulkes, burqas and hijabs. Melissa Camire spoke with *Newsday* on what steps employers should take so that what is considered appropriate and neat is broadened and less subjective. She said: "With the laws in place, companies should review policies and make sure there's no wording that overtly prohibits what the laws protect. Even if there are no explicit prohibitions, companies should examine how their appearance policies are interpreted to ensure that such policies aren't being enforced in a way that would run afoul of the new laws."

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