



**CALIFORNIA CIVIL RIGHTS DEPARTMENT**  
**2024 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY**

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In 2024, the following bills were passed by the California Legislature, signed by Governor Gavin Newsom, and chaptered into law. Each becomes effective on January 1, 2025, unless stated otherwise. The appendix provides additional information about these bills.

## **Statutes Enforced by the Civil Rights Department (CRD)**

### **EMPLOYMENT**

#### **Local Enforcement of Employment Antidiscrimination Protections**

Senate Bill 1340 amends the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) (at Government Code section 12993) to allow localities in California to enforce local employment antidiscrimination protections. Such local enforcement must:

- concern an employment complaint filed with CRD;
- occur after CRD has issued a right-to-sue notice;
- commence before the expiration of the deadline stated in the right-to-sue notice; and
- be conducted pursuant to a local law that is at least as protective as FEHA.

The bill requires CRD to promulgate regulations governing local enforcement. Local enforcement must comply with CRD's regulations within one year of their effective date; before that time, localities must use procedures substantially similar to Article 1 (commencing with Government Code section 12960) of Chapter 7 of FEHA. The bill does not prohibit a complainant from filing a timely civil action following their receipt of a right-to-sue notice from CRD, but the bill tolls a complainant's deadline to file a lawsuit during any local enforcement.

#### **CRD's Enforcement Authority over the Age Discrimination in Employment Act**

Section 24 of Assembly Bill 3281 amends FEHA (at Government Code section 12930(h)) to clarify CRD's authority to prosecute civil actions under the federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967.

#### **Employment Protections for Jury Service, Court Appearances, and Victims of Violence**

Assembly Bill 2499 adds to FEHA (at Government Code section 12945.8) various employment protections for employees who serve on juries, appear in court, obtain restraining orders or other relief, or are victims of violence or family members of victims of violence. Until December 31, 2024, Labor Code sections 230 and 230.1 provided some of these protections. On January 1, 2025, AB 2499 repeals Labor Code sections 230 and 230.1, transferring the protections to FEHA and expanding them in certain respects. In making this transition, the bill allows CRD to enforce these protections and allows employees to file complaints with CRD for investigation or to obtain an immediate right-to-sue notice.

An employee of an employer of any size is entitled to:

- unlimited leaves of absence for jury duty (if the employee provides reasonable advance notice to the employer), to comply with a court order to appear in court, or to seek a restraining order or other injunctive relief to help ensure the health, safety, or welfare of the employee or their child (if the employee is a victim of violence);
- safety-related reasonable accommodations while at work, when the employee (or their family member) is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or another act of violence; and

- protection from discrimination and retaliation on the basis of being a victim of violence or a family member of a victim of violence.

In addition, an employee of employers with 25 or more employees who is a victim of violence or a family member of a victim of violence is entitled to take leave to:

- seek a restraining order or injunctive relief;
- prepare for or participate in a related civil or criminal proceeding;
- seek medical or mental health services;
- access services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center or victim services organization;
- provide care to a victim, children or dependent adults;
- participate in safety planning;
- seek civil or criminal legal services; or
- find housing and move, including enrolling children in school or childcare.

An employee that is a victim of violence or a family member of a deceased victim is entitled to up to 12 weeks per year of leave for these purposes. AB 2499 allows employers to impose a lower cap (10 days) on leave taken by an employee who is a family member of a living victim; however, if the leave is for the purpose of helping a family member relocate, it may be limited to five days.

An employee may use vacation, personal leave, paid sick leave, or other compensatory time off that is otherwise available to the employee for leave taken under AB 2499. Leave runs concurrently with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and California Family Rights Act if the employee is eligible for leave under either law.

AB 2499 requires employers to provide notice to employees regarding these protections; an employer can use a notice drafted by CRD or a substantially similar notice. CRD's notice will be available by July 1, 2025.

AB 2499 makes minor conforming changes to the Education, Labor, and Welfare and Institutions Code.

### **Driver's License Requirements in Job Ads**

Senate Bill 1100 adds to FEHA (at Government Code section 12940(q)) a prohibition against employers stating in a job advertisement or other material that an applicant must have a driver's license, unless an exception applies. An employer may include this requirement in a job ad or other material only if the employer reasonably expects driving to be one of the functions for the position and the employer reasonably believes that satisfying the function using another form of transportation would not be comparable in travel time or cost.

## **CRD CONCILIATION SERVICES**

### **Community Conflict Resolution Assistance and Confidentiality**

Assembly Bill 672 amends FEHA (at Government Code section 12931) to provide that CRD may *offer* conflict resolution services to communities impacted by civil rights violations that threaten peaceful community relations. Currently, CRD's [Community Conflict Resolution Unit](#) provides conflict resolution services (such as mediation, technical assistance, education, and training) to communities to resolve

conflict related to discriminatory practices. Before AB 672, the department was authorized to provide these services *in response to requests* from communities. AB 672 does not require any community to accept CRD's offer of assistance. AB 672 also clarifies that this assistance is to be provided in a confidential manner.

### **Small Employer Family Leave Mediation Program**

Assembly Bill 2011 amends FEHA (at Government Code section 12945.21) to make permanent CRD's small employer family leave mediation program. The program provides free mediation services to small employers (5 to 19 employees) and their employees who are in dispute about an employee's right to family and medical leave or bereavement leave. This mediation is required before an employee can file a civil action against the employer, if either the employee or the employer requests it. AB 2011 also expands the program by adding reproductive loss leave to the types of claims eligible for mediation under the program. In addition, the bill deems a mediation in the program complete in an additional circumstance – if the CRD mediator determines the employer does not have between 5 and 19 employees.

## **HATE VIOLENCE, HUMAN TRAFFICKING, AND PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Prohibition on Distribution of Terrorizing Hate Materials**

Assembly Bill 3024 amends the Ralph Civil Rights Act (Civil Code section 51.7), which provides civil remedies against violence and intimidation by threat of violence based on someone's actual or perceived protected characteristic, such as their race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity (commonly referred to as "hate violence"). AB 3024 provides that "intimidation by threat of violence" includes "terrorizing the owner or occupant of private property with the distribution of materials on the private property, without authorization, with the purpose of terrorizing the owner or occupant."

In addition, the bill provides that speech alone does not violate the Ralph Act unless certain requirements are met: the speech threatens violence against a specific person or group of people, the victim reasonably fears violence will be committed against them or their property because of the speech, and the person threatening violence has the apparent ability to carry out the threat. AB 3024 went into effect on September 25, 2024, immediately upon signing by the Governor.

### **Creation of Labor Trafficking Unit within the Department of Justice**

When effective, Assembly Bill 1888 adds section 12530.5 to the Government Code, creating the Labor Trafficking unit within the Department of Justice to:

- receive labor trafficking complaints and refer them to appropriate agencies for investigation, prosecution, or other remedies;
- coordinate with CRD, the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), and other state, local, and tribal entities to combat labor trafficking;
- ensure local, state, and tribal entities use a victim-centered approach and that victims are informed of and connected to available services;
- create a tracking and reporting system for other agencies and departments to report potential labor trafficking to the unit; and

- annually report to the Legislature on the complaints received and their outcomes, as well as challenges encountered while pursuing the work of the unit.

CRD and DIR must immediately report suspected labor trafficking activity they encounter to the unit and, on a quarterly basis, must provide trafficking reports and complaint data and information to the unit.

AB 1888 will not go into effect unless and until adequate funding is appropriated by the Legislature. If there is no such appropriation by January 1, 2030, the bill will not go into effect unless other legislation extends that date.

### **Defining Race to Include Traits Associated with Race**

Assembly Bill 1815 amends the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Civil Code section 51) to clarify that discrimination based on “race” includes discrimination based on traits associated with race, such as hair texture and protective hairstyles. The bill defines “protective hairstyles” to include braids, locs, and twists. As a result, this bill clarifies that the Unruh Act already prohibits businesses and public accommodations from discriminating against a person or group because of their hair texture, protective hairstyle, or another trait associated with race.

AB 1815 also amends the definition of “race” under FEHA and the Education Code to clarify that the term includes all traits associated with race and is not limited to those “historically” associated with race. By doing so, this bill expands on the protections established by the CROWN Act (SB 188, Ch. 58, Stats. 2019), which defined “race” in both FEHA and the antidiscrimination provisions of the Education Code to include “traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles.”

### **Prohibition of Discrimination Based on a Combination of Characteristics**

Senate Bill 1137 clarifies that FEHA, the Unruh Act, and sections 200 and 210.2 of the Education Code already prohibit discrimination based on any combination of two or more protected characteristics, such as when someone experiences discrimination based on a combination of their race and sex. SB 1137 clarifies that these civil rights laws cover a combination of protected characteristics that someone has or is perceived to have, as well as when someone is associated with someone who has or is perceived to have a combination of protected characteristics.

## **Related Statutes Not Enforced by CRD**

### **EMPLOYMENT**

#### **Paid Family Leave Recipients No Longer Required to Use Vacation Leave**

Assembly Bill 2123 amends section 3303.1 of the Unemployment Insurance Code to remove an employer's authority to require employees to take two weeks of vacation leave before accessing their benefits under the Paid Family Leave program. The Paid Family Leave program provides eligible employees up to eight weeks of wage replacement benefits within a 12-month period to take time off work to care for a seriously ill family member; to bond with a child after birth, foster care placement, or adoption; or to take a leave of absence to participate in certain events related to a family member's military deployment. This bill applies to any leave of absence that begins on or after January 1, 2025.

#### **Janitorial Workers Safety and Protection Study**

Assembly Bill 2364 requires the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) to contract with the University of California, Los Angeles Labor Center "to conduct a study evaluating opportunities to improve worker safety and safeguard employment rights in the janitorial industry." The bill requires DIR to convene an advisory committee of experts, stakeholders, and representatives from CRD and specified divisions within DIR to make recommendations regarding the scope of the study. AB 2364 also increases the amount that janitorial employers must pay per participant to qualified organizations providing sexual violence and harassment prevention training.

### **HOUSING**

#### **Tenants' Positive Rental Payment Credit Reporting**

Assembly Bill 2747 adds section 1954.07 to the Civil Code to require landlords to offer tenants the option of having their positive rental payment information reported to at least one nationwide consumer reporting agency.

- For residential leases entered on and after April 1, 2025, landlords must make this offer at the time of the lease agreement and at least once per year after then.
- For residential leases that exist on January 1, 2025, the landlord must make this offer to the tenant no later than April 1, 2025, and at least once per year after then.

The bill authorizes a tenant to request and requires a landlord to provide additional copies of the written election of positive rental payment information reporting at any time. A tenant who chooses to have positive rental payment information reported may make a written request to stop that reporting. AB 2747 requires the landlord to follow that request. The bill prohibits a tenant who stops positive rental payment information reporting from choosing reporting again for at least six months. Landlords may charge a tenant who chooses to have positive rental payment information reported either the actual cost to the landlord to provide the service or 10 dollars per month, whichever is less. The bill prohibits a landlord from taking certain actions against the tenant if a tenant fails to pay the landlord's rent reporting charge. The bill does not apply to a landlord of a residential rental building that contains 15 or fewer dwelling units (unless specified conditions are met) or an assisted housing development (as defined by the bill).

### **Landlords Prohibited from Charging Unnecessary Application Screening Fees**

Assembly Bill 2493 amends Civil Code section 1950.6, which concerns rental housing application screening fees. Among other changes, the bill:

- prohibits a landlord from charging an applicant for rental housing an application screening fee when the landlord knows or should have known that no rental unit is available at that time or will be available within a reasonable period;
- prohibits a landlord from charging an application screening fee unless the landlord offers an application screening process that considers applications in the order in which they are received (among other requirements) or provides that the landlord will refund the entire screening fee to any applicant who is not selected for tenancy within the specified timeframe; and
- states that nothing in the section prevents a landlord from accepting a reusable tenant screening report (as defined in Civil Code section 1950.1).

### **Landlords Prohibited from Charging Certain Fees to Renters**

Senate Bill 611 amends various sections of the Civil Code and the Code of Civil Procedure to:

- prohibit a landlord or their agent from charging a tenant a fee for serving, posting, or otherwise delivering a notice;
- prohibit a landlord from charging tenants a fee for paying rent or a security deposit by check; and
- requires a landlord who charges a higher security deposit on a military service member tenant based on the service member's history of poor credit or of causing damage to rental property to clearly disclose the amount and the reasoning in the lease agreement. The landlord is required to refund the additional amount within six months if the tenant is not in arrears for any rent due, and that date shall also be set forth in the lease agreement.

### **OTHER**

### **Law Enforcement Agencies to Adopt Policies to Support Trafficking Survivors**

Assembly Bill 2020, the Survivors of Human Trafficking Support Act, adds Division 15 to the Welfare and Institutions Code. This addition requires the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training to develop guidelines for law enforcement agencies' interactions with survivors of human trafficking by no later than June 1, 2026. The bill requires each law enforcement agency to, by no later than December 1, 2026, adopt a written policy for interacting with survivors of human trafficking based on the guidelines developed by the Commission. At a minimum, these policies must include a requirement for officers to offer and arrange an advocate from a rape crisis center, immigrant services organization, or other appropriate organization, to accompany the survivor during interviews with law enforcement, examinations, and proceedings. Law enforcement officers are required to get a written waiver if a survivor refuses an advocate. The policy must also include a requirement to refer survivors to services through county social services departments and community-based organizations that provide services consistent with the survivor's culture, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

### **Postsecondary Training and Updates to Definition of Nationality and Religion in Education Code**

Assembly Bill 2925 amends the Education Code to require California colleges and universities to provide training addressing discrimination against—at a minimum—the five most targeted groups in the state, as determined by the Department of Justice’s “Hate Crime in California” publication. The bill also defines “nationality” or “national identity” to include a person’s actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, citizenship, or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. The bill defines discrimination on the basis of religion to include, but not be limited to, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

**Artificial Intelligence Definition**

Assembly Bill 2885 defines “artificial intelligence” under California law as “an engineered or machine-based system that varies in its level of autonomy and that can, for explicit or implicit objective, infer from the input it receives how to generate outputs that can influence physical or virtual environments.” This definition is set forth in new Government Code section 11546.45.5 and is referenced throughout the Government Code, Business and Professions Code, and Education Code.



**APPENDIX: ENROLLED BILLS OF 2024**

**STATUTES ENFORCED BY OR INVOLVING CRD**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Statutes of 2024 Chapter</b>	<b>Code Sections Amended, Added, or Repealed</b>
AB 672	Civil Rights Department: Community Assistance	Jackson	343	Amends Government Code section 12931
AB 1815	Discrimination: race: hairstyles	Weber	619	Amends Civil Code section 51, Government Code section 12926, and Education Code section 212.1
AB 1888	Labor Trafficking Unit	Arambula	614	Adds Government Code section 12530.2
AB 2011	Unlawful employment practices: small employer family leave mediation program: reproductive loss leave	Bauer-Kahan	147	Amends Government Code section 12945.21
AB 2499	Employment: unlawful discrimination and paid sick days: victims of violence	Schiavo	967	Amends Civil Code section 214, Education Code section 48205, Labor Code section 246.5, Penal Code 679.027, and Welfare and Institutions Code section 11320.31; adds Government Code section 12945.8; repeals Labor Code section 230, 230.1
AB 3024	Civil Rights	Ward	584	Amends Civil Code section 51.7
AB 3281	Judiciary omnibus	Assembly Judiciary Committee	853	Amends Government Code section 12930 (as relevant to CRD)
SB 1100	Discrimination: driver's license	Portantino	877	Amends Government Code section 12940
SB 1137	Discrimination claims: combination of characteristics	Smallwood-Cuevas	779	Amends Civil Code section 51; Government Code section 12920, 12926; and Education Code section 212.1
SB 1340	Discrimination	Smallwood-Cuevas	626	Amends Government Code section 12993

**RELATED STATUTES NOT ENFORCED BY CRD**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Statues of 2024 Chapter</b>	<b>Code Sections Amended, Added or Repealed</b>
AB 2020	Survivors of Human Trafficking Support Act	Bonta	615	Adds Welfare and Institutions Code sections 23020–23026
AB 2123	Disability compensation: paid family leave	Papan	949	Amends Unemployment Insurance Code section 3303.1
AB 2364	Property service worker protection	Rivas	394	Amends Labor Code sections 1420 and 1429.5; adds Labor Code section 1429.6
AB 2493	Tenancy: application screening fee	Pellerin	966	Amends Civil Code section 1950.6
AB 2747	Tenancy: credit reporting	Haney	279	Adds Civil Code section 1954.07
AB 2885	Artificial intelligence	Bauer-Kahan	843	Amends Business and Professions Code section 22675, Education Code section 75002, Government Code sections 11546.45.5, 11547.5, and 53083.1
AB 2925	Postsecondary education: Equity in Higher Education Act: prohibition on discrimination: training	Friedman	844	Amends Education Code sections 66252, 66261.3, and 66262; adds Education Code section 66268
SB 611	Residential rental properties; fees and security	Menjivar	287	Amends Civil Code sections 1946, 1946.1, 1947.3, 1950.5; and Code of Civil Procedure section 1161