



Civil Rights Department

651 Bannan Street, Suite 200 | Sacramento | CA | 95811
800-884-1684 (voice) | California's Relay Service at 711
www.calcivilrights.ca.gov | contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov

October 19, 2026
For Immediate Release
publicaffairs@calcivilrights.ca.gov
916-938-4113

Civil Rights Council Releases Proposed Regulations to Modernize Pregnancy Leave Protections

Encourages members of the public to submit comments by the December 8, 2026 deadline

SACRAMENTO – The California Civil Rights Council today highlighted the release of proposed regulations to strengthen and modernize protections for pregnant workers, including with respect to leave, reasonable accommodations, and temporary transfers. As part of the regulatory process, the council encourages members of the public to submit comments on the proposed regulations by the December 8, 2026 deadline.

“These proposed regulations are an opportunity to ensure that California's civil rights laws continue to protect pregnant workers and new parents, making our state a place where families can flourish,” **said Civil Rights Council Chair Candice Cho**. “We look forward to engaging with the public on these important updates.”

“The council's proposed regulations update our state's protections to ensure that pregnant workers have the important right to leave and accommodations that help them stay at work,” **said Civil Rights Council Councilmember Denny Chan**. “It was an honor to work on updating these regulations, and I encourage the public to submit comments and attend the public hearing.”

“As the workplace continues to change, our state’s civil rights protections have to keep pace,” **said California Civil Rights Department Director Kevin Kish**. “Pregnant workers and new parents have the right to take time off and ask for changes at work to help them stay on the job. These proposed updates will help ensure that California law not only meets but exceeds protections at the federal level. I’m grateful to the councilmembers and our staff for their work on this important proposal.”

New Laws, Stronger Protections

The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) is charged with enforcing many of the state’s robust civil rights laws, including in the workplace, housing, businesses, and state-funded programs. As part of those efforts, the [Civil Rights Council](#) — housed within CRD — develops and issues regulations to implement state civil rights protections. These regulations generally aim to provide detailed legal guidance on how to effectively and appropriately apply the law.

With respect to pregnant workers, the Civil Rights Council’s proposal aims to modernize and strengthen existing regulations around leave, reasonable accommodations, and temporary transfers, which have not been updated in over a decade. In particular, the proposal aims to incorporate changes to California law over recent years and, where appropriate, aligns state law with the Federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and its regulations, which went into effect in 2024. Examples of proposed updates include:

- Further clarifying that pregnancy protections apply to related medical conditions, such as post-partum depression, low milk supply, or lower back pain.
- Highlighting additional reasonable accommodations, including telework, changes to the work environment, or pausing some essential functions.
- Broadening examples of healthcare providers who can support an employee’s need for accommodations, such as nurses, doulas, and psychiatrists.
- Removing the requirement that bonding leave be taken in two-week increments, increasing flexibility for new parents.

How to Participate

The Civil Rights Council and CRD encourage all interested parties and members of the public to participate in the regulatory process. Written comments must be submitted by 5:00 PM PT on December 8, 2026. Comments may be submitted by email at council@calcivilrights.ca.gov. A public hearing on the proposed regulations will be held at 11:00 AM PT on December 8, 2026.

You can go to the [notice of proposed rulemaking](#) to learn more about how to submit comments or participate in the hearing. You can also learn more about the proposal on the [Civil Rights Council page](#). For email updates on the proposed rulemaking and other Civil Rights Council activities, you can [subscribe online](#).

If you or someone you know has experienced discrimination, CRD may be able to assist you through its [complaint process](#). The department also [provides general information and factsheets online](#) about civil rights protections, including on the [California Family Rights Act](#), [leave from work after a reproductive loss](#), and [pregnancy disability leave](#).

###

The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) is the state agency charged with enforcing California’s civil rights laws. CRD’s mission is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state-funded programs and activities, and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit calcivilrights.ca.gov.

