

2020 -- H 7934

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

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A N A C T

RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, Kislak, Walsh, Carson, and Donovan

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Corporations

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 28-5-6 of the General Laws in Chapter 28-5 entitled "Fair  
2   Employment Practices" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **28-5-6. Definitions.**

4           When used in this chapter:

5           (1) "Age" means anyone who is at least forty (40) years of age.

6           (2) "Because of sex" or "on the basis of sex" include, but are not limited to, because of or  
7   on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, and women affected by  
8   pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions shall be treated the same for all employment  
9   related purposes, including receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs, as other persons not  
10   so affected but similar in their ability or inability to work, and nothing in this chapter shall be  
11   interpreted to permit otherwise.

12          (3) "Commission" means the Rhode Island commission against discrimination created by  
13   this chapter.

14          (4) "Conviction" means, for the purposes of this chapter only, any verdict or finding of  
15   guilt after a criminal trial or any plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a criminal charge.

16          (5) "Disability" means a disability as defined in § 42-87-1.

17          (6) "Discriminate" includes segregate or separate.

18          (7) "Employee" ~~does not include any individual employed by his or her parents, spouse, or~~  
19   ~~child, or in the domestic service of any person~~ includes any individual under the direction and

1 control of an employer under any appointment or contract of hire or apprenticeship, express or  
2 implied, oral or written.

3 (i) "Employee" does not include any individual employed by their parents, by their spouse,  
4 or by their child.

5 (ii) "Employee" for purposes of this section shall include volunteers and unpaid interns.

6 (8)(i) "Employer" includes the state and all political subdivisions of the state and any  
7 person in this state employing ~~four (4)~~ one or more individuals, and any person acting in the interest  
8 of an employer directly or indirectly.

9 (ii) Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to apply to a religious corporation,  
10 association, educational institution, or society with respect to the employment of individuals of its  
11 religion to perform work connected with the carrying on of its activities.

12 (9) "Employment agency" includes any person undertaking with or without compensation  
13 to procure opportunities to work, or to procure, recruit, refer, or place employees.

14 (10) "Firefighter" means an employee the duties of whose position includes work  
15 connected with the control and extinguishment of fires or the maintenance and use of firefighting  
16 apparatus and equipment, including an employee engaged in this activity who is transferred or  
17 promoted to a supervisory or administrative position.

18 (11) "Gender identity or expression" includes a person's actual or perceived gender, as well  
19 as a person's gender identity, gender-related self image, gender-related appearance, or gender-  
20 related expression; whether or not that gender identity, gender-related self image, gender-related  
21 appearance, or gender-related expression is different from that traditionally associated with the  
22 person's sex at birth.

23 (12) "Labor organization" includes any organization which exists for the purpose, in whole  
24 or in part, of collective bargaining or of dealing with employers concerning grievances, terms or  
25 conditions of employment, or of other mutual aid or protection in relation to employment.

26 (13) "Law enforcement officer" means an employee the duties of whose position include  
27 investigation, apprehension, or detention of individuals suspected or convicted of offenses against  
28 the criminal laws of the state, including an employee engaged in such activity who is transferred or  
29 promoted to a supervisory or administrative position. For the purpose of this subdivision,  
30 "detention" includes the duties of employees assigned to guard individuals incarcerated in any penal  
31 institution.

32 (14) "Person" includes one or more individuals, partnerships, associations, organizations,  
33 corporations, legal representatives, trustees, trustees in bankruptcy, or receivers.

34 (15) "Religion" includes all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief,

1 unless an employer, union or employment agency demonstrates that it is unable to reasonably  
2 accommodate to an employee's or prospective employee's or union member's religious observance  
3 or practice without undue hardship on the conduct of its business.

4 (16) "Sexual orientation" means having or being perceived as having an orientation for  
5 heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality. This definition is intended to describe the status of  
6 persons and does not render lawful any conduct prohibited by the criminal laws of this state nor  
7 impose any duty on a religious organization. This definition does not confer legislative approval of  
8 that status, but is intended to assure the basic human rights of persons to obtain and hold  
9 employment, regardless of that status.

10 (17) The terms, as used regarding persons with disabilities:

11 (i) "Auxiliary aids and services" and "reasonable accommodation" shall have the same  
12 meaning as those items are defined in § 42-87-1.1; and

13 (ii) "Hardship" means an "undue hardship" as defined in § 42-87-1.1.

14 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

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1           This act would amend the definition of employees for purposes of the fair employment  
2 practices chapter to include individuals under any appointment or contract of hire or apprenticeship,  
3 or any volunteer or unpaid intern and would exclude from the definition of employed any individual  
4 employed by their parents, spouse or child.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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