

Maryland Sexual Orientation Discrimination Attorney

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Everyone deserves to work without discrimination based on who they are or whom they love. Yet LGBTQ+ employees still face unfair treatment when applying for jobs, seeking promotions, or interacting with supervisors and coworkers. Maryland law protects employees from discrimination based on sexual orientation. At Joseph, Greenwald & Laake, we represent employees who believe they have experienced discrimination and help them understand their rights and legal options.

Is Sexual Orientation Discrimination Illegal?

Yes. Maryland anti-discrimination laws prohibit employment discrimination based on sexual orientation, including discrimination against gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees. These protections cover hiring, termination, compensation, promotions, and other terms of employment. Maryland law also prohibits retaliation against employees who report discrimination or participate in an investigation about another employee's discrimination concerns. Maryland state law protections generally apply to employers with 15 or more employees, although separate provisions addressing workplace harassment and county-specific laws can cover smaller employers in some circumstances.

What Are Some Examples of Sexual Orientation Discrimination at Work?

Sexual orientation discrimination can affect decisions throughout the employment relationship. An employer may refuse to hire a qualified applicant because they are gay, deny an employee a promotion because of their same-sex relationship, or terminate someone after learning about their sexual orientation. Other examples include unequal pay, exclusion from professional opportunities, or limiting employee benefits, such as offering fertility benefits to opposite-sex couples but not same-sex couples.

Employers may also treat LGBTQ+ workers differently based on sex-based stereotypes about how men or women should speak, behave, or dress. Treating an employee unfavorably because they do not conform to those stereotypes may violate applicable anti-discrimination laws, depending on the circumstances.

Harassment can also create a hostile work environment. Coworkers or supervisors may make repeated offensive comments about an employee's sexual orientation, mock their partner, or make inappropriate remarks about their personal life. Employees who report discrimination may face retaliation, including reduced hours, unfavorable assignments, demotion, or wrongful termination.

What to Do If You're Experiencing Sexual Orientation Discrimination

If you believe your employer has discriminated against you, document what happened and preserve evidence. Keep emails, text messages, performance reviews, workplace policies, and copies of any complaints you submit. Record important dates and identify witnesses who may have information about the conduct. You may report the issue internally, but an internal complaint does not pause external filing deadlines. An experienced employment law attorney can help you evaluate the evidence and determine your next steps.

How to File a Sexual Orientation Discrimination Claim in Maryland

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) investigates complaints involving employment discrimination under Maryland law. The process generally includes these steps:

1. **Submit an inquiry.** Complete the MCCR's online Preliminary Questionnaire.
2. **Complete intake.** An intake officer reviews your information and determines whether the complaint meets the agency's requirements.

3. **Sign the formal charge.** If the complaint qualifies, MCCR prepares a Charge of Discrimination for you to review, sign, and return.
4. **Participate in the investigation.** A Civil Rights Officer investigates the allegations and gives both parties an opportunity to respond.
5. **Explore resolution options.** Depending on the case, mediation or other procedures may help resolve the dispute.

Most Maryland employment discrimination complaints must be filed within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory act. Employment harassment complaints generally have a two-year deadline. Some cases may also involve the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), while others may involve local human rights agencies like the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights, the Howard County Office of Human Rights & Equity, or the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights. The process depends on the circumstances.

What Remedies Can You Recover for Sexual Orientation Discrimination?

The remedies available depend on the type of discrimination claim and the laws that apply. Depending on the case, an employee may seek back pay, reinstatement, compensation for financial losses, damages for emotional harm, or other relief authorized by law. An attorney can review your circumstances and explain which remedies may be available.

How Joseph, Greenwald & Laake Can Help With Your Discrimination Claim

At Joseph, Greenwald & Laake, we represent employees in employment discrimination matters. Our attorneys review the evidence, explain applicable laws and filing deadlines, and help clients determine how to proceed. Depending on the case, we may assist with an administrative complaint, negotiate a resolution, or pursue litigation to protect our client's interests.

Sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination involve related but distinct legal issues.

Speak With a Maryland Sexual Orientation Discrimination Lawyer Today

If your employer has discriminated against you, allowed harassment to continue, or retaliated against you for speaking up, you do not have to navigate the situation alone. At JGL, we can help you evaluate your options and determine an appropriate resolution.

Contact [JGL](#) to discuss your situation with a Maryland sexual orientation discrimination attorney or learn more about [LGBTQ+ Employment Discrimination](#).