

WILLIAM PEDUTO
MAYOR



JAM HAMMOND
INTERIM DIRECTOR

CITY OF PITTSBURGH
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
CITY-COUNTY BUILDING

Guidance on the “CROWN Act”

Protections for Natural, Protective, and Cultural Hair Styles and Textures

I. Background on Hair

It is imperative that the City do its part to remove barriers to success and health for communities across the City, including historically marginalized communities. This includes recognition that people’s natural hair grows in different textures, lengths, and colors, and can be worn in a variety of hairstyles, which hold cultural significance in people’s respective communities. It also includes recognition that policies or dress codes enacted by employers, housing providers, and places of public accommodation have disparate impacts upon different communities, especially persons of color or religious minorities. The City of Pittsburgh wants to make certain and explicit that people who reside, work, and patronize places of public accommodation within the City do not face hair discrimination; including hair discrimination in the workplace, when searching for a home, and when entering a business or other place of public accommodation.

People in the City of Pittsburgh deserve to wear their natural hair without being denied access to opportunity or being subjected to discrimination. At present, there is evidence to suggest that hair discrimination disproportionately impacts people along racial and religious lines as well as other characteristics and bases inextricably linked to personhood and identity. Hairstyles can hold deep religious or cultural significance, and hair discrimination impacts the ability to acquire or obtain housing, employment, and public accommodations along protected characteristics such as race, religion, and ancestry. The notion of “professionalism,” aided by grooming policies that prohibit historically Black natural hairstyles, have long been used to exclude Black people from both professional and social environments. This same notion refuses to recognize that, in fact, Black hair is and always has been “professional”.

This document is meant to provide guidance around the City Code’s protections and best practices for employers, housing providers, and places of public accommodation. This document is not meant to serve as an exhaustive list of all potential forms of hairstyle discrimination under the Code. Individuals should consult their attorneys for advice regarding particular situations.

II. Protections for Individuals

- a. Definitions** - City Code § 651.04 has been amended to include definitions of Hairstyle and Protective and Cultural Hair Textures and Hairstyles:
 - (uu) HAIRSTYLE Hair texture and styles of hair of any length, such as protective or cultural hairstyles, natural hairstyles, and other forms of hair presentation.

(vv) PROTECTIVE AND CULTURAL HAIR TEXTURES AND HAIRSTYLES Hairstyles and hair textures most commonly associated with race, including, but not limited to braids, cornrows, locs, Bantu knots, Afros, and twists, whether or not hair extensions or treatments are used to create or maintain any such style, and whether or not hair is adorned by hair ornaments, beads, or, headwraps.

b. Employment - City code § 659.02 has defined the following employment practices as discriminatory and unlawful:

- i. For any employer to refuse to hire any person or otherwise to discriminate against any person with respect to hiring, tenure, compensation, promotion, discharge or any other terms, conditions or privileges directly or indirectly related to employment because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- ii. For any employer, employment agency or labor organization to establish, announce or follow a policy of denying or limiting, through a quota system or otherwise, the employment or membership opportunities of any person or group of persons because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- iii. For any employer, labor organization, employment agency or any joint labor management committee controlling apprentice training programs to deny to or withhold from any person the right to be admitted to or participate in a guidance program, an apprenticeship training program, an on-the-job training program or any other occupational training program because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- iv. For any employer, employment agency or labor organization to require of any applicant for employment or membership any information concerning hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- v. For any employer, employment agency or labor organization to publish or circulate, or to cause to be published or circulated, any notice or advertisement relating to employment or membership which indicates any discrimination because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- vi. For any employment agency to fail or refuse to classify properly or refer for employment or otherwise to discriminate against any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- vii. For any employer substantially to confine or limit recruitment or hiring of employees, with intent to circumvent the spirit and purpose of this Article, to any employment agency, employment service, labor organization, training school, training center or any other employee-referring source which serves persons who predominantly have protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
- viii. For any labor organization to discriminate against any person in any way which would deprive or limit their employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect their status as an applicant for employment or as an employee with regard to tenure, compensation, promotion, discharge or any other terms, conditions or privileges directly or indirectly related to employment because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

- c. **Housing** - City Code § 659.03 has defined the following housing/real estate practices as discriminatory and unlawful:
- i. For any owner, real estate broker or any other person to refuse to sell, lease, sublease, rent, assign or otherwise transfer, or to refuse to negotiate for the sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of, the title, leasehold or other interest in any dwelling to any person, or to represent that any dwelling is not available for inspection, sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer when in fact it is so available, or otherwise to deny or withhold any dwelling from any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
 - ii. For any person, including any owner or real estate broker, to include in the terms, conditions or privileges of any sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of any dwelling any clause, condition or restriction discriminating against or requiring any other person to discriminate against, any person in the use or occupancy of such dwelling because of or hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures an hairstyles.
 - iii. For any person, including any owner or real estate broker, to discriminate in the furnishing of any facilities or services for any dwelling because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
 - iv. For any person, including any owner or real estate broker, to publish, circulate, issue or display, or cause to be published, circulated, issued or displayed, any communication, notice, advertisement or sign of any kind relating to the sale, rental, lease, sublease, assignment, transfer or listing of a dwelling or accommodations which indicates any preference, limitation, specification or discrimination based on hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.
 - v. For any person, including any bank, banking organization, mortgage company, insurance company or other financial or lending institution, or any agent or employee thereof, engaged in whole or in part in the business of providing or arranging for appraisals and/or for financial assistance for the purchase, lease, acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of any dwelling or dwellings:
 1. To discriminate against any person or group of persons because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles of such person or group of persons or of the prospective occupants or tenants of such dwelling in the granting, withholding, extending, modifying or in the rates, terms, conditions or privileges of any such financial assistance in connection therewith.
 2. To use any form of application for such financial assistance or make any record of inquiry in connection with applications for such financial assistance which indicates, directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification or discrimination as to hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles or any intent to make any such limitation, specification or discrimination.
 3. For any real estate broker or real estate salesperson or agent, or any other person for business or economic purposes, to induce, directly or indirectly, or to attempt to induce directly or indirectly, the sale or rental or the listing for sale or rental, of any dwelling by representing that a change has occurred or will or may occur regarding the entry or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a

person or persons of a particular hairstyle or protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles of the street, block, neighborhood or area in which such dwelling is located.

- vi. For any person to deny access, membership or participation in any multiple listing service, real estate brokers' organization or other service, organization or facility relating to the business of selling or renting dwellings, or to discriminate in the terms or conditions of such access, membership or participation, on account of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

d. Public Accommodations: City code § 659.04 has defined the following public accommodations practices as discriminatory and unlawful:

- i. Refuse, withhold from or deny to any person because of their hairstyle and protective and cultural hair texture and hairstyle either directly or indirectly, any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, services or privileges, products or goods in such place of public accommodation, resort or amusement.
- ii. Publish, circulate, issue, display, post or mail, either directly or indirectly, any printed, verbal, or written communication, notice or advertisement to the effect that indicates any preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination of any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, goods, products, services and privileges of any such place shall be refused, withheld or denied to any person on account of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles is unwelcome, objectionable, or not acceptable, desired or solicited.

III. Best Practices and Guidance

a. Employers (Including Employment Agencies and Labor Unions)

i. *Disparate Treatment of Employees based on Hairstyles:*

Treating an employee less favorably than others because of a person's hair is discrimination in violation of the Code. This remains true if hairstyle is even part of the reason or motivation for the less favorable treatment of (or "adverse action" against) the employee. These prohibitions apply equally to applicants for employment or membership.

ii. *Policies that Single Out Employees based on Hairstyles:*

Generally, employers within the City of Pittsburgh may not enforce grooming or appearance policies that ban, limit, or restrict hairstyles. Examples include banning hair styled into twists, braids, cornrows, Afros, locs, Bantu knots, fades, or other hairstyles closely associated with racial, cultural, and ethnic identity. Any policy specifically singling out such a hairstyle will generally constitute direct evidence of disparate treatment under the City's CROWN Act as well as unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, and/or ancestry. The underlying concept is that hair or how one's hair is styled or groomed is not indicative of one's job abilities or performance.

iii. *Policies with a Disparate Impact on Employees:*

- 1. Hair-related policies that appear neutral (also called "facially neutral policies") will also likely violate the City's CROWN Act if they are discriminatorily applied or selectively enforced. Examples of seemingly neutral policies are requiring hair be "kempt", "tidy"

or “neat”. For example, if Black people with shoulder-length locs or braids are told that they cannot maintain their hairstyle at work because it is not “tidy,” or “kempt” whereas people with fine or straight shoulder-length hair are not told to change their hair.

2. By way of further example, if a retail store has a policy that only employees with a “neat and tidy appearance” may work on the sales floor, but the store uses that policy to station all employees with locs or Afros in the stockroom rather than the sales floor, the store will likely be liable for discrimination under the City’s CROWN Act. They may also be liable for discrimination under other local, state, and federal laws enforced by the City of Pittsburgh.
 3. Covered entities also may not justify policies that, explicitly or in practice, ban, limit, or restrict natural hair or hairstyles associated with different cultures based on a desire to project a certain “corporate image,” because of concerns about “customer preference,” customer complaints, or because of speculative health or safety concerns. Any legitimate health and safety justification must be rooted in objective, factual evidence—not generalized assumptions or stereotypes—that the hairstyle in question would actually present a materially enhanced risk of harm to the wearer or to others.
 4. Even in that event, covered entities must consider whether the legitimate health or safety risk can be eliminated or reduced by reasonable alternatives other than banning or restricting a hairstyle. In addition, less restrictive alternatives like hair ties, hairnets, and head coverings must be required universally and without regard to hairstyle, race, or religion. For example, if a fast-food restaurant requires cooks with hair longer than shoulder-length to wear hairnets, it cannot require only employees with long locs to wear hairnets, while allowing employees with long straight hair to wear it loose.
- iv. *Hairstyle based Harassment:*** Hairstyle discrimination may also take the form of harassment related to race, religion, national origin, or ancestry. Such harassment may consist of a single severe incident, or of repeated acts or behaviors which create an environment pervaded by stereotyping, degradation, humiliation, bias, and/or objectification. Examples include comments regarding hair, hairstyle, hair ornamentation, or appearance. Harassment may also include ridicule, offensive jokes, insults, name - calling, offensive pictures, or physical threats or conduct, such as unwelcome touching, if such behavior is motivated by hairstyle.
- v. *Reasonable Accommodations Regarding Hairstyles of Religious Significance:***

1. Employers should document all efforts to initiate, engage in, and conclude the interactive process with an employee, including the following information for each such employee:
 - a. When and under what circumstances the interactive process was initiated; What information, if any, was provided to the employer during the interactive process;
 - b. The employee's stated or observed limitation(s);
 - c. The types of accommodation(s) that were requested by the employee or suggested by the employer during the interactive process;
 - d. The dates of each subsequent conversation between the employer and employee regarding the accommodation(s);
 - e. Whether or not a reasonable accommodation was ultimately identified and, if not, the employer's justification for denying an accommodation;
 - f. A copy of the notice provided to the employee regarding the determination reached at the conclusion of the interactive process.

vi. Retaliation:

1. The Code also prohibits an employer, employment agency, or labor organization from taking action against a person because of a person objecting to or voicing concerns of discrimination under the City's CROWN Act, which is also called engaging in "protected activities". Examples of protected activities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Opposing a discriminatory act prohibited by the Code;
 - b. Making a complaint of discrimination under the Code;
 - c. Testifying or otherwise assisting or participating in an investigation by the Commission or a proceeding before the Commission.
2. In the context of hairstyle discrimination in employment, examples of such unlawful retaliation include, but are not limited to, taking adverse action (such as discipline, demotion, reassignment to less desirable duties, or termination) against an employee because the employee:
 - a. Requested a reasonable accommodation;
 - b. Reported to management that they believe they are being discriminated against based upon hairstyle;
 - c. Filed a complaint with the Commission alleging that the employer has violated the Code's prohibitions regarding hairstyle discrimination;
 - d. Told their employer that they intend to file such a complaint with the Commission.

**QUICK REFERENCE FOR EMPLOYERS/EMPLOYMENT
AGENCIES/LABOR UNIONS**

DO eliminate restrictions on hairstyles for employees and applicants wherever possible.
DO, if it is absolutely necessary to have hairstyle policies, develop written policies and distribute those policies to all employees and/or members.

DO inform employees of their right to request reasonable accommodations for hairstyles of religious significance.

DO engage in the interactive process for individuals who request religious reasonable accommodations related to hairstyle.

DO train managers and/or Human Resources personnel on anti-discrimination laws and company policies regarding hairstyle.

DO recognize that hair texture or hairstyle, including use of extensions, hair ornaments, or headwraps is not indicative of job performance.

DO apply policies equally to all employees, contractors, and applicants.

DO utilize the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations for policy review before enacting policies related to hairstyles.

DO NOT refuse to hire any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT discriminate against any person with respect to hiring, tenure, compensation, promotion, discharge or any other terms, conditions or privileges directly or indirectly related to employment because of hairstyles and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT establish, announce, or follow/enforce a policy of denying or limiting, employment or membership opportunities of any person or group of persons because of hairstyles, natural hairstyles, protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyle, including hair ornamentation and head wraps.

DO NOT deny to or withhold from any person the right to be admitted to or participate in a guidance program, an apprenticeship training program, an on-the-job training program or any other occupational training program because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT require any applicant for employment or membership to provide any information concerning hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT publish or circulate, or to cause to be published or circulated, any notice or advertisement relating to employment or membership which indicates any preference against hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT fail or refuse to classify properly or refer a person for employment because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT substantially confine or limit recruitment or hiring of employees, with intent to circumvent the spirit and purpose of the CROWN Act.

DO NOT discriminate against any person in any way that would deprive or limit their employment opportunities because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT discriminate against any person in any way that would adversely affect their status with regard to tenure, compensation, promotion, discharge or any other terms, conditions or privileges directly or indirectly related to employment because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

b. Housing Providers

- i.** The following is a non-exhaustive list of persons and entities bound by the CROWN Act:
 - 1. Individuals/Sole Proprietorships
 - 2. Corporations
 - 3. Partnerships
 - 4. Limited Liability Companies (“LLCs”)
 - 5. Other Business Entities
 - 6. Property Owners
 - 7. Property Managers
 - 8. Landlords
 - 9. Persons Who Sublet Their Apartment(s) (“Sublessors”)
 - 10. Homeowners Associations
 - 11. Condominium Associations
 - 12. Persons Who are Selling Their Property
 - 13. Persons Who are Advertising Property
 - 14. Lenders, such as Banks and Mortgage Brokerage Services
 - 15. Insurance Providers
 - 16. Realtors and Real Estate Agents
- ii.** Generally, housing providers within the City of Pittsburgh may not enforce grooming or appearance policies that ban, limit, or restrict hair styled into twists, braids, cornrows, Afros, locs, Bantu knots, fades, or other hairstyles closely associated with religious, racial, cultural, and ethnic identity. Any policy specifically singling out a hairstyle will generally constitute direct evidence of disparate treatment under the City’s CROWN Act as well as unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, and/or ancestry.
- iii.** Additionally, housing providers may not retaliate against tenants for objecting to discrimination under the City’s CROWN Act, including but not limited to, objecting to discriminatory hair policies or objecting to facially neutral hair policies that are enforced in a discriminatory fashion.

QUICK REFERENCE FOR LANDOWNERS/LANDLORDS/REAL ESTATE AGENTS OR BROKERS/REAL ESTATE FINANCIERS

DO eliminate restrictions on hairstyles.

DO recognize that hair texture or hairstyle, including use of extensions, hair ornaments, or headwraps is not indicative of worthiness as a tenant, buyer, mortgagor, or borrower.

DO apply policies equally to all persons.

DO provide uniform services to all persons.

DO utilize the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations for policy review before enacting policies related to hairstyles.

DO NOT refuse to sell, lease, sublease, rent, assign or transfer the title, leasehold or

other interest in any dwelling to any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT refuse to negotiate for the sale, lease, sublease, rental, assign or transfer of the title, leasehold or other interest in any dwelling to any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT represent that any dwelling is not available for inspection, sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer when in fact it is so available because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT otherwise deny or withhold any dwelling from any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT include in the terms, conditions or privileges of any sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of any dwelling any clause, condition or restriction discriminating against or requiring any other person to discriminate against, any person in the use or occupancy of the dwelling because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures an hairstyles.

DO NOT discriminate in providing any facilities or services for any dwelling because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT publish, circulate, issue or display, or cause to be published, circulated, issued or displayed, any communication, notice, advertisement or sign of any kind relating to the sale, rental, lease, sublease, assignment, transfer or listing of a dwelling or accommodations which indicates any preference, limitation, specification or discrimination based on hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT grant, withhold, extend, modify the rates, terms, conditions or privileges of any such financial assistance in connection with financing any dwelling for purchase, rent, or any other transfer for any person or group of persons because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT use any form that indicates, directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification or discrimination as to hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT use any form which or any intent to make any such limitation, specification or discrimination as to hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT induce, directly or indirectly, or to attempt to induce directly or indirectly, the sale or rental or the listing for sale or rental, of any dwelling by representing that the street, block, or neighborhood has changed, may change, or will change because a person or persons of a particular hairstyle or protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles are or may live in the area.

DO NOT deny access, membership or participation in any multiple listing service, real estate brokers' organization or other service, organization or facility relating to the business of selling or renting dwellings on account of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT discriminate in the terms or conditions of such access, membership or participation in any multiple listing service, real estate brokers' organization or other service, organization or facility relating to the business of selling or renting dwellings on account of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

c. Places of Public Accommodation

- i.** Generally, places of public accommodation include, but are not limited to:
 - 1.** Restaurants, Bars, and Cafes
 - 2.** Stores, Shops, and Markets
 - 3.** Hotels

4. Salons, Stylists, and Barbers
 5. Recreational Facilities, Gyms, and Fitness Centers
 6. Automobile Dealerships and Vehicle Rentals
 7. Storage Rentals
 8. Banks and Financial Institutions.
- ii.** Persons and entities who are to comply with the CROWN Act include, but are not limited to:
1. Individuals/Sole Proprietorships
 2. Partnerships
 3. Limited Liability Companies (“LLCs”),
 4. For Profit Corporations
 5. Nonprofit Corporations
 6. Owners
 7. Lessees
 8. Proprietors
 9. Managers
 10. Superintendents
 11. Agents
 12. Contractors
 13. Employees
- iii.** Within the City of Pittsburgh, places of public accommodation may not enforce grooming or appearance policies that ban, limit, or restrict hair styled into twists, braids, cornrows, Afros, locs, Bantu knots, fades, or other hairstyles closely associated with religious, racial, cultural, and ethnic identity. Any policy specifically singling out a hairstyle will generally constitute direct evidence of disparate treatment under the City’s CROWN Act as well as unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, and/or ancestry. For example, if a school handbook requires students to maintain “appropriate” hair and lists Black hairstyles as examples of “inappropriate” hairstyles, the school has likely violated the City’s CROWN Act. Such policies either explicitly or in application rest on baseless racial stereotypes that hairstyles closely associated with Black people are inherently messy, unkempt, or disorderly.
- iv.** Other examples of unlawful activities include, but are not limited to:
1. Refuse entry into a business or any other place that is open to the public based on a person’s hairstyle
 2. Refuse to do business with someone based on a person’s hairstyle
 3. Set different terms, conditions, and/or privileges on doing business with someone based on a person’s hairstyle
 4. Use different qualification criteria based on a person’s hairstyle
 5. Provide different services, products, privileges, and/or facilities based on a person’s hairstyle
 6. Make, print, and/or publish discriminatory statements, advertisements, and/or signs

7. Harass someone, which includes but is not limited to sexual harassment, threats, or coercion.
 - a. Such harassment may consist of a single severe incident, or of repeated acts or behaviors which create an environment pervaded by stereotyping, degradation, humiliation, bias, and/or objectification.
 - b. Examples include comments regarding hair, hairstyle, hair ornamentation, or appearance. Harassment may also include ridicule, offensive jokes, insults, name - calling, offensive pictures, or physical threats or conduct, such as unwelcome touching, if such behavior is motivated by hairstyle.
8. Additionally, covered entities may not retaliate against customers, patrons, or students for objecting to discrimination under the City's CROWN Act, including but not limited to, objecting to discriminatory hair policies or objecting to facially neutral hair policies that are enforced in a discriminatory fashion.

QUICK REFERENCE FOR PLACES OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

DO eliminate restrictions on hairstyles for guests/customers/patrons/members/and/or applicants.

DO recognize that hair texture or hairstyle, including use of extensions, hair ornaments, or headwraps is not indicative of the worthiness of guests/customers/patrons/members/and/or applicants.

DO apply policies equally to all guests/customers/patrons/members/and/or applicants.

DO utilize the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations for policy review before enacting policies related to hairstyles.

DO develop uniform policies and practices, put them in writing, have them reviewed by legal counsel, train all staff and personnel on them, apply them universally, and share them openly.

DO offer training and incentives for training for employees to learn about things like cultural awareness.

DO NOT Refuse, withhold from or deny to any person either directly or indirectly, any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, services or privileges, products or goods because of their hairstyle and protective and cultural hair texture and hairstyle.

DO NOT publish, circulate, issue, display, post or mail, either directly or indirectly, any printed, verbal, or written communication, notice or advertisement to the effect that indicates any preference for or against a person based on hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT publish, circulate, issue, display, post or mail, either directly or indirectly, any communication, notice or advertisement to the effect that indicates limitation, specification, or discrimination of any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, goods, products, refusal of services, withheld or denied to any person because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.

DO NOT indicate in any way that a person is unwelcome, objectionable, or not acceptable, desired or solicited because of hairstyles and protective and cultural hair

textures and hairstyles.

IV. Commission on Human Relations

a. Enforcement

The Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations (“PghCHR”) is a law enforcement agency, which derives its authority from the City Fair Practices Provisions found in Article V, Chapters 651 through 659 of the Pittsburgh City Code.

These provisions make it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of:

Employment	Housing	Public Accommodations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● race ● color ● religion ● age (over 40) ● ancestry ● national origin ● place of birth ● sex ● sexual orientation ● gender identity or expression ● handicap or disability ● pregnancy (including partners) ● hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● race ● citizenship and immigration status ● color ● religion ● familial status ● ancestry ● national origin ● place of birth ● preferred language ● sex ● sexual orientation ● gender identity or expression ● handicap or disability ● retaliation ● status as a survivor of domestic violence ● hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● race ● citizenship and immigration status ● color ● religion ● ancestry ● national origin ● place of birth ● preferred language ● sex ● sexual orientation ● gender identity or expression ● handicap or disability ● hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles

The PghCHR investigates complaints of alleged discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations within the City of Pittsburgh. PghCHR is tasked with investigating civil rights violations and any conditions having an adverse effect on intergroup relations in the City. In addition, PghCHR conducts community education and other outreach programs for schools, community groups, businesses, professional organizations, and City departments in order to promote equal rights and opportunities for all who work in, live in or visit our city.

The fifteen persons who are members of the Commission on Human Relations serve without pay and are appointed to four-year terms of office by the Mayor. The PghCHR employs a director and staff. In addition to reviewing the findings of staff, the Commission may hold public hearings, subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance, require the production of evidence, make findings of fact, issue orders and publish such findings of fact and orders.

b. Policy Review

The PghCHR provides policy review as a service to employers, housing providers, and entities that are involved in public accommodations. The PghCHR provides this free service to raise awareness about federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws applicable within the City of Pittsburgh and to proactively allow for persons and entities to avoid non-compliance with the law. Written policies may be submitted to the Commission for review by using the Commission contact information below.

c. Contact Information

Office Address: 414 Grant Street, City County Building, Suite 908, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Telephone: 412-255-2600 or 412-436-9619

Web Site: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/chr/index.html>

E-mail: human.relations@pittsburghpa.gov

LEGAL DISCLAIMER:

The information contained in this Guidance is not intended as legal advice. You should consult your attorney for case-specific advice when situations arise involving disputes about hairstyles and/or natural hair texture.