Engage PEO Client Alert: Louisiana

CROWN Act Prohibits Race-Based Hair Discrimination in Employment and Educational Opportunities

What's New: Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards signed the CROWN Act into law on June 21, 2022.

Why it Matters: The CROWN Act stands for "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair". The law prohibits race-based hair discrimination. Specifically, the act protects a person from being denied employment and educational opportunities because of their hair texture.

A national legislative effort began in 2019 as a collaboration between the soap maker Dove and three nonprofits: the National Urban League, Color Of Change, and Western Center on Law and Poverty. Currently, 16 states have passed a version of the CROWN Act providing protections for cultural and ethnic hairstyles for their citizens.

What This Means for Louisiana Employers: Employers should be prepared to incorporate the CROWN Act's protections into their discrimination policies. As an example, an employer's discrimination policy can contain the following language as a means of integrating the Act:

> "The following protected class(es) is/are considered integrated, to the extent they are not already listed, into the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy of the handbook: hairstyle, which is defined as any characteristic, texture, form, or manner of wearing an individual's hair if such characteristic, texture, form or manner is commonly associated with a particular race, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or religion."

Please reach out to your Engage Human Resources Consultant if you have any questions concerning this alert or other H.R.-related matters.