

Your Life, Your Rights

Chapter 9:

Employment Rights

Easy Read Guidebook



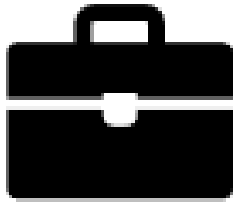
Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals

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This easy read guidebook has been designed using images from Flaticon.com

How to Use This Guidebook



This Guidebook is about your employment rights.



Employment rights come from laws that protect you at work.



These laws make it possible for you to work, get paid for your work, and be safe at work.



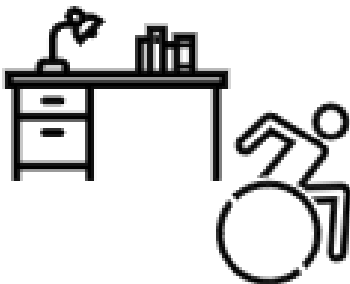
This Guidebook will explain what your rights are and how you can protect them.



Some of this information may make you sad or upset.



Stop reading this guidebook and ask for support if you start to feel upset.



You do not have to read this guidebook all at once.



It is okay to take breaks as you read this guidebook.

Part 1: Employment Rights



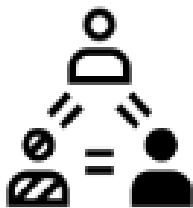
Everyone has the right to choose their job, feel safe at work, and be treated well.



This is true for all workers, including workers who:



- Have a disability.



- Are of any race, ethnicity, or gender.



- Are part of the LGBTQ+ Community.



- Are veterans.



- Are migrant workers.



You will learn about your rights as a worker in this guidebook.

Your employment rights are:



1. Fair treatment no matter who you are.



This means you have the same chance to apply, get hired, and work in a job as other people.



It is against the law for an employer to deny you a job or treat you bad because of how you look or sound.



Employers must treat you fair no matter your race, color of your skin, or birth country.



Employers must also treat you fair no matter your gender, age, disability, or faith.



You have the right to get paid and have benefits like time-off that other workers have at your job.



You also have the right to go to trainings and get promoted as other workers have at your job.



These are examples of fair treatment at work.



2. Earn the same money as others doing the same work.



You have the right to the same salary, bonuses, and overtime pay.



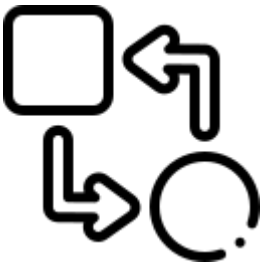
You also have the right the same benefits, like paid time-off and retirement plans.



This is true no matter what you look like, sound like, or where you are from.



3. Make changes to the job to help you succeed.



The changes made to your job are called accommodations.



You have the right to accommodations because of your disability and/or religion.



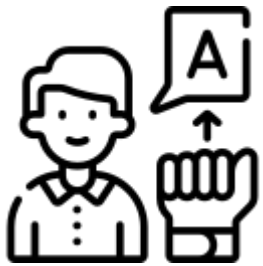
Examples of accommodations are:



- Making a close parking spot and clearing walkways.



- Being able to work from home and/or work different hours.



- Having an interpreter or screen reader.



- Getting to wear special clothes for religious days.



4. Have access to info about your rights.



The government must share info with the community in many languages.



This info must also be easy to understand and find online.



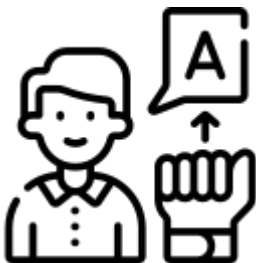
This info includes your employment rights.



The government office that shares info about these rights is the U.S. Department of Labor.



The U.S. Department of Labor has a few websites on employment rights offered in many languages.



They also offer interpreters in over 100 languages to help people that call them.



As a result, you can learn about your employment rights in your preferred language.



5. Keep some info about yourself private .



Your right to privacy starts when you apply to, and interview for, a job.



It is against the law for employers to ask you certain questions in an interview.



Employers can't ask you about your race, religion, disability, gender, age, or where you were born.



Employers can't ask you about past work injuries, arrests, or other personal things.



After you start working, you may decide to tell your employer about your disability.



You may decide to do this if you need job accommodations.



If you do tell your employer about your disability, they must keep it private.



6. Take time out of work when needed.



Depending on where you work, you may earn sick and vacation time that you can use when you want to.



You may also be covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).



If you have FMLA, you can take up 12-weeks off from work to care for yourself or a family member who is sick.



Most employers must also give you a break to pump breast milk if you are nursing.



This right comes from the Pump Act, which also says employers must give you a private place to pump at work.



Taking time off when you need it can be a type of job accommodation.



But no law makes all employers offer the same benefits, so your options may depend on where you work.



7. Work in a safe place where you will not get hurt or sick.



Your employer must make sure the workplace is free of dangers.



If there are parts of your job that are dangerous, your employer must let you know about them.



Your employer must train you about the dangers and how to do your job safely.



There are many kinds of workplace dangers.



Two examples are being around chemicals and working in high heat.



You right to safety at work also includes working in a place where others do not harass you.



You also have the right to report workplace dangers.



8. Join with coworkers to make the workplace better.



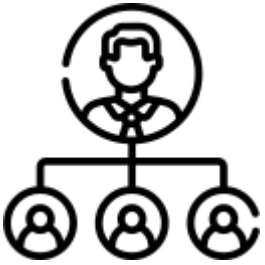
Joining with coworkers is often called organizing with co-workers or forming a union.



This is when you and other of coworkers form a group to talk about a workplace problem and how to fix it.



The workplace problem may be about safety, pay, work hours, and more.



Your group can then talk to your boss about the problem so they can fix it.



It is against the law for your boss to punish you or other group members because you reported a problem.



If your boss does not help, you can also report the problem to others, like the government or press.



You also have the right not to join the union if you do not want to.



9. Report broken rights and not get in trouble.



You have the right to report problems about your job without getting in trouble.



You can report if your employer is treating you bad.



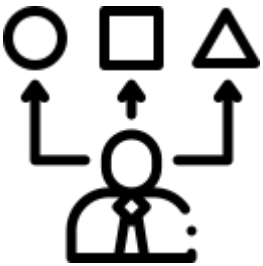
This can include things like your employer not paying you what they should pay you.



This can also be your employer treating you worse than others because of how you look or sound.



You can also report if your job is unsafe.



The government office you report the problem to depends on the type of problem you are having.



Learn about the government offices you can report to on [Worker.gov](https://www.worker.gov).

Part 2: Advocating For Fair Treatment



It is important to know what your employment rights are.



Knowing your rights is the first step to advocate for yourself.



Advocating for yourself means to stick up for yourself.



Advocating for yourself brings you closer to living the life you choose.

Part 3: Protecting Your Rights



You are the best person to protect your employment rights.



If you think your rights are violated, call the [U.S. Department of Labor](https://www.dol.gov) by phone at 1-866-487-2365. There is help in over 200 languages.



You can also get help from the [Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights](https://www.rhodeshr.com).

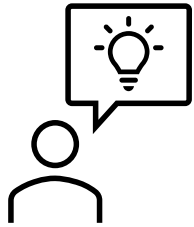


Remember, you have the right to fair treatment and to live your best life.

Part 4: Resources



In this section you will find a list of websites that were used to make this guidebook.



You can explore these websites to learn more about your rights.



There is always more to learn about your rights.



Knowing your rights helps you protect them better.

Fair Treatment Rights at Work:

1. State of Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT)

- **Webpage:** [Fair Employment Practices](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares information on your right to fair treatment at work. It also shares the steps you can take to report unfair treatment.

2. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- **Webpage:** [Know Your Rights: Workplace Discrimination is Illegal](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares an overview of antidiscrimination laws at work. **Antidiscrimination** is the act of treating all people fair no matter who they are.

Fair Pay Rights at Work

1. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- **Webpage:** [Equal Pay/Compensation Discrimination](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage gives an overview of the Equal Pay Act. This law makes it illegal for people doing the same work to be paid different.

2. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage gives an overview of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Title VII is the part of the Civil Rights Act that protects your rights at work.

Job Accommodation Rights at Work:

1. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- **Webpage:** [Disability Discrimination and Employment Decisions](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares an overview about the rights of people with disabilities. This includes the right to job accommodations.

2. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- **Webpage:** [Religious Discrimination](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares an overview of worker's rights related to their religion.

Access Rights to Info About Work:

1. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [News Release: US Department of Labor Marks Executive Order 13166's 24th Anniversary, Continues Implementing Updated Language Access Plan](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares details about how the U.S. Department of Labor shares info with the public. The focus is on how info is shared in many languages.

2. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [Plain Language](#)
- **Summary:** On this webpage, the U.S. Department of Labor talks about how they share info in plain language.

Privacy Rights at Work:

1. ACLU Rhode Island

- **Webpage:** [Know Your Rights: Workplace Privacy in RI](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares a booklet about your privacy rights at work.

2. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- **Webpage:** [Your Rights](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares an overview of your rights at work, including your right to privacy.

Time-off Rights at Work:

1. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [Family and Medical Leave Act](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares resources about the Family and Medical Leave Act.

2. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [FLSA Protections to Pump at Work](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage gives an overview of the Pump Act for people nursing.

Safety Rights at Work:

1. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

- **Webpage:** [Job Safety and Health: It's the Law Workplace Poster](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares the OSHA job safety and health poster. The poster gives an overview of your workplace safety rights. The poster is available in many languages.

2. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

- **Webpage:** [Heat Illness Prevention](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares info about your rights to safety at work. The focus is on staying safe when you work in high heat.

Union Rights at Work:

1. The National Labor Relations Board

- **Webpage:** [Your Rights Under the National Labor Relations Act](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage is a printable flyer. It shares an overview of your rights to join or not join a union at work. The goal of a union is to make the workplace better for all workers.

2. Worker Organizing Resource and Knowledge Center

- **Webpage:** [Right to Organize with Co-Workers](#)
- **Summary:** This website is a resource about forming a union at work.

Right to Report a Problem at Work:

1. Worker.gov

- **Webpage:** [Retaliation Rights](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares details about your rights to reporting. You have the right to report a problem at work without getting punished. This webpage also shares details on how you can report workplace problems.

2. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- **Webpage:** [Your Rights](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage shares an overview of your rights at work, including your right to complain.

Bonus websites to learn more:

1. Disability Rights Rhode Island

- **Webpage:** [Employment Discrimination Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage lists common questions about employment rights.

2. Worker.gov

- **Webpage:** [You Have Rights](#)
- **Summary:** This website was made the by U.S. Department of Labor. It is an online resource where workers can learn about their rights.

3. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [Migrant Worker Rights](#)
- **Summary:** This website is an online resource about migrant worker rights.

4. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [U.S. Department of Labor](#)
- **Summary:** This U.S. Department of Labor's Facebook page. You can follow it for news, updates, and resources.

5. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [Veterans' Employment and Training Service](#)
- **Summary:** This website is an online resource for veteran workers.

6. U.S. Department of Labor

- **Webpage:** [Summary of the Major Laws of the Department of Labor](#)
- **Summary:** This webpage is a resource about employment laws. It lists the major laws and gives a short summary about them.