

# Protected Categories

Illegal discrimination involves treating someone (applicant or employee) unfavorably or differently because of one or more of the following bases:

**Race:** Personal characteristics associated with race such as hair texture, skin color, or certain facial features.

**Color:** Skin color complexion.

**National Origin:** Individuals from or associated with a particular country or part of the world; ethnicity or accent; or because a person appears to be of a certain ethnic background (even if they are not).

**Sex:** Gender (male or female)

**Religion:** Sincerely held religious, ethical or moral beliefs. Includes but not limited to traditional organized religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism.

**Age:** People who are age 40 or older are protected.

**Disability:** A mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. Not the same as a veteran's disability.

**GINA:** Using genetic information in making employment decisions including information about an individual's genetic tests and the genetic tests of an individual's family members, as well as information about any disease, disorder, or condition of an individual's family members (i.e. an individual's family medical history).

**Retaliation:** Filed a charge of discrimination, complained about or opposed discrimination; or participated in an employment discrimination proceeding such as an investigation or lawsuit.