

Locke Lord QuickStudy: New Trend Becomes Reality in Massachusetts

Locke Lord LLP

WRITTEN BY

[Richard D. Glovsky](#)

In a [previous QuickStudy](#), we reported that the Massachusetts House of Representatives had passed legislation, commonly known as the Crown Act. We noted that it remained to be seen whether the Senate would follow suit.

We write to report that not only did the Massachusetts Senate approve the legislation, both houses of the legislature unanimously passed the new legislation and it was signed into law by Governor Charlie Baker on July 23. Massachusetts is the eighteenth state to enact such legislation.

The new law defines a “natural or protective hairstyle” as “hair texture, hair type and hairstyles, which shall include, but not be limited to, natural and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, twists, Bantu knots and other formations.” The legislation empowers the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination to enforce the law as it enforces discriminatory acts by employers and others on the basis of national origin, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, gender, and other “protected classes” of individuals.

The legislation prohibits hair discrimination in employment, business, advertising and public spaces.

RELATED INDUSTRIES + PRACTICES

- [Employment Counseling](#)
- [Labor + Employment](#)