

# National Origin Discrimination

Whether an employee or job applicant's ancestry is Mexican, Ukrainian, Filipino, Arab, American Indian, or any other nationality, he or she is entitled to the same employment opportunities as anyone else. EEOC enforces the federal prohibition against national origin discrimination in employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which covers employers with fifteen (15) or more employees.

## About National Origin Discrimination

National origin discrimination means treating someone less favorably because he or she comes from a particular place, because of his or her ethnicity or accent, or because it is believed that he or she has a particular ethnic background. National origin discrimination also means treating someone less favorably at work because of marriage or other association with someone of a particular nationality. Examples of violations covered under Title VII include:

- [Employment Decisions](#)  
Title VII prohibits any employment decision, including recruitment, hiring, and firing or layoffs, based on national origin.
- [Harassment](#)  
Title VII prohibits offensive conduct, such as ethnic slurs, that creates a hostile work environment based on national origin. Employers are required to take appropriate steps to prevent and correct unlawful harassment. Likewise, employees are responsible for reporting harassment at an early stage to prevent its escalation.
- [Language](#)
  - [Accent discrimination](#)  
An employer may not base a decision on an employee's foreign accent unless the accent materially interferes with job performance.
  - [English fluency](#)  
A fluency requirement is only permissible if required for the effective performance of the position for which it is imposed.
  - [English-only rules](#)  
English-only rules must be adopted for nondiscriminatory reasons. An English-only rule may be used if it is needed to promote the safe or efficient operation of the employer's business.

## [Coverage of foreign nationals](#)

Title VII and the other antidiscrimination laws prohibit discrimination against individuals employed in the United States, regardless of citizenship. However, relief may be limited if an individual does not have work authorization.

## Statistics

## Need more information?

The law:

- [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act](#)

The regulations:

- [29 C.F.R. Part 1606](#)

Policy Documents:

- [Compliance Manual Section on National Origin Discrimination](#)
- [Question and Answers for Small Employers](#)

We also have information on:

- [Questions and Answers About the Workplace Rights of Muslims, Arabs, South Asians, and Sikhs Under the Equal Employment Opportunity Laws](#)
- [Questions and Answers About Employer Responsibilities Concerning the Employment of Muslims, Arabs, South Asians, and Sikhs](#)
- [Other Federal Laws Prohibiting National Origin Discrimination in Employment](#), and
- [Related Forms of Discrimination](#)

## You may also be interested in:

- [How to File a Charge of Employment Discrimination](#)
- [Mediation at EEOC](#)
- [Training and Outreach](#)
- [Information for Small](#)

In Fiscal Year 2007, EEOC received 9,396 charges of national origin discrimination. Including charges from previous years, 7,773 charges were resolved, and monetary benefits for charging parties totaled \$22.8 million (not including monetary benefits obtained through litigation).

[Employers](#)

- [Charge statistics](#)

## Have a Question?

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*This page was last modified on March 4, 2008.*



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