

United States Code Annotated  
Title 8. Aliens and Nationality (Refs & Annos)  
Chapter 12. Immigration and Nationality (Refs & Annos)  
Subchapter II. Immigration  
Part VIII. General Penalty Provisions

8 U.S.C.A. § 1324b

§ 1324b. Unfair immigration-related employment practices

Effective: September 30, 1996

[Currentness](#)

**(a) Prohibition of discrimination based on national origin or citizenship status**

**(1) General rule**

It is an unfair immigration-related employment practice for a person or other entity to discriminate against any individual (other than an unauthorized alien, as defined in [section 1324a\(h\)\(3\)](#) of this title) with respect to the hiring, or recruitment or referral for a fee, of the individual for employment or the discharging of the individual from employment--

**(A)** because of such individual's national origin, or

**(B)** in the case of a protected individual (as defined in paragraph (3)), because of such individual's citizenship status.

**(2) Exceptions**

Paragraph (1) shall not apply to--

**(A)** a person or other entity that employs three or fewer employees,

**(B)** a person's or entity's discrimination because of an individual's national origin if the discrimination with respect to that person or entity and that individual is covered under section 703 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, or

**(C)** discrimination because of citizenship status which is otherwise required in order to comply with law, regulation, or executive order, or required by Federal, State, or local government contract, or which the Attorney General determines to be essential for an employer to do business with an agency or department of the Federal, State, or local government.

**(3) "Protected individual" defined**

As used in paragraph (1), the term "protected individual" means an individual who--

(A) is a citizen or national of the United States, or

(B) is an alien who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence, is granted the status of an alien lawfully admitted for temporary residence under [section 1160\(a\)](#) or [1255a\(a\)\(1\)](#) of this title, is admitted as a refugee under [section 1157](#) of this title, or is granted asylum under [section 1158](#) of this title; but does not include (i) an alien who fails to apply for naturalization within six months of the date the alien first becomes eligible (by virtue of period of lawful permanent residence) to apply for naturalization or, if later, within six months after November 6, 1986, and (ii) an alien who has applied on a timely basis, but has not been naturalized as a citizen within 2 years after the date of the application, unless the alien can establish that the alien is actively pursuing naturalization, except that time consumed in the Service's processing the application shall not be counted toward the 2-year period.

#### **(4) Additional exception providing right to prefer equally qualified citizens**

Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, it is not an unfair immigration-related employment practice for a person or other entity to prefer to hire, recruit, or refer an individual who is a citizen or national of the United States over another individual who is an alien if the two individuals are equally qualified.

#### **(5) Prohibition of intimidation or retaliation**

It is also an unfair immigration-related employment practice for a person or other entity to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or retaliate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured under this section or because the individual intends to file or has filed a charge or a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this section. An individual so intimidated, threatened, coerced, or retaliated against shall be considered, for purposes of subsections (d) and (g), to have been discriminated against.

#### **(6) Treatment of certain documentary practices as employment practices**

A person's or other entity's request, for purposes of satisfying the requirements of [section 1324a\(b\)](#) of this title, for more or different documents than are required under such section or refusing to honor documents tendered that on their face reasonably appear to be genuine shall be treated as an unfair immigration-related employment practice if made for the purpose or with the intent of discriminating against an individual in violation of paragraph (1).

### **(b) Charges of violations**

#### **(1) In general**

Except as provided in paragraph (2), any person alleging that the person is adversely affected directly by an unfair immigration-related employment practice (or a person on that person's behalf) or an officer of the Service alleging that an unfair immigration-related employment practice has occurred or is occurring may file a charge respecting such practice or violation with the Special Counsel (appointed under subsection (c)). Charges shall be in writing under oath or affirmation and shall contain such information as the Attorney General requires. The Special Counsel by certified mail shall serve a notice of the charge (including the date, place, and circumstances of the alleged unfair immigration-related employment practice) on the person or entity involved within 10 days.

**(2) No overlap with EEOC complaints**

No charge may be filed respecting an unfair immigration-related employment practice described in subsection (a)(1)(A) if a charge with respect to that practice based on the same set of facts has been filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, unless the charge is dismissed as being outside the scope of such title. No charge respecting an employment practice may be filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under such title if a charge with respect to such practice based on the same set of facts has been filed under this subsection, unless the charge is dismissed under this section as being outside the scope of this section.

**(c) Special Counsel**

**(1) Appointment**

The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, a Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “Special Counsel”) within the Department of Justice to serve for a term of four years. In the case of a vacancy in the office of the Special Counsel the President may designate the officer or employee who shall act as Special Counsel during such vacancy.

**(2) Duties**

The Special Counsel shall be responsible for investigation of charges and issuance of complaints under this section and in respect of the prosecution of all such complaints before administrative law judges and the exercise of certain functions under subsection (j)(1).

**(3) Compensation**

The Special Counsel is entitled to receive compensation at a rate not to exceed the rate now or hereafter provided for grade GS-17 of the General Schedule, under [section 5332 of Title 5](#).

**(4) Regional offices**

The Special Counsel, in accordance with regulations of the Attorney General, shall establish such regional offices as may be necessary to carry out his duties.

**(d) Investigation of charges**

**(1) By Special Counsel**

The Special Counsel shall investigate each charge received and, within 120 days of the date of the receipt of the charge, determine whether or not there is reasonable cause to believe that the charge is true and whether or not to bring a complaint with respect to the charge before an administrative law judge. The Special Counsel may, on his own initiative, conduct

investigations respecting unfair immigration-related employment practices and, based on such an investigation and subject to paragraph (3), file a complaint before such a judge.

**(2) Private actions**

If the Special Counsel, after receiving such a charge respecting an unfair immigration-related employment practice which alleges knowing and intentional discriminatory activity or a pattern or practice of discriminatory activity, has not filed a complaint before an administrative law judge with respect to such charge within such 120-day period, the Special Counsel shall notify the person making the charge of the determination not to file such a complaint during such period and the person making the charge may (subject to paragraph (3)) file a complaint directly before such a judge within 90 days after the date of receipt of the notice. The Special Counsel's failure to file such a complaint within such 120-day period shall not affect the right of the Special Counsel to investigate the charge or to bring a complaint before an administrative law judge during such 90-day period.

**(3) Time limitations on complaints**

No complaint may be filed respecting any unfair immigration-related employment practice occurring more than 180 days prior to the date of the filing of the charge with the Special Counsel. This subparagraph shall not prevent the subsequent amending of a charge or complaint under subsection (e)(1).

**(e) Hearings**

**(1) Notice**

Whenever a complaint is made that a person or entity has engaged in or is engaging in any such unfair immigration-related employment practice, an administrative law judge shall have power to issue and cause to be served upon such person or entity a copy of the complaint and a notice of hearing before the judge at a place therein fixed, not less than five days after the serving of the complaint. Any such complaint may be amended by the judge conducting the hearing, upon the motion of the party filing the complaint, in the judge's discretion at any time prior to the issuance of an order based thereon. The person or entity so complained of shall have the right to file an answer to the original or amended complaint and to appear in person or otherwise and give testimony at the place and time fixed in the complaint.

**(2) Judges hearing cases**

Hearings on complaints under this subsection shall be considered before administrative law judges who are specially designated by the Attorney General as having special training respecting employment discrimination and, to the extent practicable, before such judges who only consider cases under this section.

**(3) Complainant as party**

Any person filing a charge with the Special Counsel respecting an unfair immigration-related employment practice shall be considered a party to any complaint before an administrative law judge respecting such practice and any subsequent appeal respecting that complaint. In the discretion of the judge conducting the hearing, any other person may be allowed to intervene in the proceeding and to present testimony.

**(f) Testimony and authority of hearing officers**

**(1) Testimony**

The testimony taken by the administrative law judge shall be reduced to writing. Thereafter, the judge, in his discretion, upon notice may provide for the taking of further testimony or hear argument.

**(2) Authority of administrative law judges**

In conducting investigations and hearings under this subsection <sup>1</sup> and in accordance with regulations of the Attorney General, the Special Counsel and administrative law judges shall have reasonable access to examine evidence of any person or entity being investigated. The administrative law judges by subpoena may compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence at any designated place or hearing. In case of contumacy or refusal to obey a subpoena lawfully issued under this paragraph and upon application of the administrative law judge, an appropriate district court of the United States may issue an order requiring compliance with such subpoena and any failure to obey such order may be punished by such court as a contempt thereof.

**(g) Determinations**

**(1) Order**

The administrative law judge shall issue and cause to be served on the parties to the proceeding an order, which shall be final unless appealed as provided under subsection (i).

**(2) Orders finding violations**

**(A) In general**

If, upon the preponderance of the evidence, an administrative law judge determines that any person or entity named in the complaint has engaged in or is engaging in any such unfair immigration-related employment practice, then the judge shall state his findings of fact and shall issue and cause to be served on such person or entity an order which requires such person or entity to cease and desist from such unfair immigration-related employment practice.

**(B) Contents of order**

Such an order also may require the person or entity--

- (i)** to comply with the requirements of [section 1324a\(b\)](#) of this title with respect to individuals hired (or recruited or referred for employment for a fee) during a period of up to three years;

(ii) to retain for the period referred to in clause (i) and only for purposes consistent with [section 1324a\(b\)\(5\)](#) of this title, the name and address of each individual who applies, in person or in writing, for hiring for an existing position, or for recruiting or referring for a fee, for employment in the United States;

(iii) to hire individuals directly and adversely affected, with or without back pay;

(iv)(I) except as provided in subclauses (II) through (IV), to pay a civil penalty of not less than \$250 and not more than \$2,000 for each individual discriminated against,

(II) except as provided in subclauses (III) and (IV), in the case of a person or entity previously subject to a single order under this paragraph, to pay a civil penalty of not less than \$2,000 and not more than \$5,000 for each individual discriminated against,

(III) except as provided in subclause (IV), in the case of a person or entity previously subject to more than one order under this paragraph, to pay a civil penalty of not less than \$3,000 and not more than \$10,000 for each individual discriminated against, and

(IV) in the case of an unfair immigration-related employment practice described in subsection (a)(6), to pay a civil penalty of not less than \$100 and not more than \$1,000 for each individual discriminated against;

(v) to post notices to employees about their rights under this section and employers' obligations under [section 1324a](#) of this title;

(vi) to educate all personnel involved in hiring and complying with this section or [section 1324a](#) of this title about the requirements of this section or such section;

(vii) to remove (in an appropriate case) a false performance review or false warning from an employee's personnel file; and

(viii) to lift (in an appropriate case) any restrictions on an employee's assignments, work shifts, or movements.

#### **(C) Limitation on back pay remedy**

In providing a remedy under subparagraph (B)(iii), back pay liability shall not accrue from a date more than two years prior to the date of the filing of a charge with the Special Counsel. Interim earnings or amounts earnable with reasonable diligence by the individual or individuals discriminated against shall operate to reduce the back pay otherwise allowable under such paragraph. No order shall require the hiring of an individual as an employee or the payment to an individual of any back pay, if the individual was refused employment for any reason other than discrimination on account of national origin or citizenship status.

#### **(D) Treatment of distinct entities**

In applying this subsection in the case of a person or entity composed of distinct, physically separate subdivisions each of which provides separately for the hiring, recruiting, or referring for employment, without reference to the practices of, and not under the control of or common control with, another subdivision, each such subdivision shall be considered a separate person or entity.

**(3) Orders not finding violations**

If upon the preponderance of the evidence an administrative law judge determines that the person or entity named in the complaint has not engaged and is not engaging in any such unfair immigration-related employment practice, then the judge shall state his findings of fact and shall issue an order dismissing the complaint.

**(h) Awarding of attorney's fees**

In any complaint respecting an unfair immigration-related employment practice, an administrative law judge, in the judge's discretion, may allow a prevailing party, other than the United States, a reasonable attorney's fee, if the losing party's argument is without reasonable foundation in law and fact.

**(i) Review of final orders**

**(1) In general**

Not later than 60 days after the entry of such final order, any person aggrieved by such final order may seek a review of such order in the United States court of appeals for the circuit in which the violation is alleged to have occurred or in which the employer resides or transacts business.

**(2) Further review**

Upon the filing of the record with the court, the jurisdiction of the court shall be exclusive and its judgment shall be final, except that the same shall be subject to review by the Supreme Court of the United States upon writ of certiorari or certification as provided in [section 1254 of Title 28](#).

**(j) Court enforcement of administrative orders**

**(1) In general**

If an order of the agency is not appealed under subsection (i)(1), the Special Counsel (or, if the Special Counsel fails to act, the person filing the charge) may petition the United States district court for the district in which a violation of the order is alleged to have occurred, or in which the respondent resides or transacts business, for the enforcement of the order of the administrative law judge, by filing in such court a written petition praying that such order be enforced.

**(2) Court enforcement order**

Upon the filing of such petition, the court shall have jurisdiction to make and enter a decree enforcing the order of the administrative law judge. In such a proceeding, the order of the administrative law judge shall not be subject to review.

**(3) Enforcement decree in original review**

If, upon appeal of an order under subsection (i)(1), the United States court of appeals does not reverse such order, such court shall have the jurisdiction to make and enter a decree enforcing the order of the administrative law judge.

**(4) Awarding of attorney's fees**

In any judicial proceeding under subsection (i) or this subsection, the court, in its discretion, may allow a prevailing party, other than the United States, a reasonable attorney's fee as part of costs but only if the losing party's argument is without reasonable foundation in law and fact.

**(k) Termination dates**

**(1)** This section shall not apply to discrimination in hiring, recruiting, or referring, or discharging of individuals occurring after the date of any termination of the provisions of [section 1324a](#) of this title, under subsection (l) of that section.

**(2)** The provisions of this section shall terminate 30 calendar days after receipt of the last report required to be transmitted under [section 1324a\(j\)](#) of this title if--

**(A)** the Comptroller General determines, and so reports in such report that--

**(i)** no significant discrimination has resulted, against citizens or nationals of the United States or against any eligible workers seeking employment, from the implementation of [section 1324a](#) of this title, or

**(ii)** such section has created an unreasonable burden on employers hiring such workers; and

**(B)** there has been enacted, within such period of 30 calendar days, a joint resolution stating in substance that the Congress approves the findings of the Comptroller General contained in such report.

The provisions of [subsections \(m\) and \(n\) of section 1324a](#) of this title shall apply to any joint resolution under subparagraph **(B)** in the same manner as they apply to a joint resolution under subsection (l) of such section.

**(l) Dissemination of information concerning anti-discrimination provisions**

**(1)** Not later than 3 months after November 29, 1990, the Special Counsel, in cooperation with the chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Secretary of Labor, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall conduct a campaign to disseminate information respecting the rights and remedies prescribed under this section and under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in connection with unfair immigration-related employment practices. Such campaign



shall be aimed at increasing the knowledge of employers, employees, and the general public concerning employer and employee rights, responsibilities, and remedies under this section and such title.

(2) In order to carry out the campaign under this subsection, the Special Counsel--

(A) may, to the extent deemed appropriate and subject to the availability of appropriations, contract with public and private organizations for outreach activities under the campaign, and

(B) shall consult with the Secretary of Labor, the chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the heads of such other agencies as may be appropriate.

(3) There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year (beginning with fiscal year 1991).

#### CREDIT(S)

(June 27, 1952, c. 477, Title II, ch. 8, § 274B, as added Pub.L. 99-603, Title I, § 102(a), Nov. 6, 1986, 100 Stat. 3374; amended Pub.L. 100-525, § 2(b), Oct. 24, 1988, 102 Stat. 2610; Pub.L. 101-649, Title V, §§ 531, 532(a), 533(a), 534(a), 535(a), 536(a), 537(a), 539(a), Nov. 29, 1990, 104 Stat. 5054-5056; Pub.L. 102-232, Title III, § 306(b)(1), (3), (c)(1), Dec. 12, 1991, 105 Stat. 1752; Pub.L. 103-416, Title II, § 219(q), Oct. 25, 1994, 108 Stat. 4317; Pub.L. 104-208, Div. C, Title IV, § 421(a), Title VI, § 671(d)(1)(B), Sept. 30, 1996, 110 Stat. 3009-670, 3009-723.)

#### Footnotes

1 So in original. Probably should be “section”.

8 U.S.C.A. § 1324b, 8 USCA § 1324b

Current through P.L. 118-62. Some statute sections may be more current, see credits for details.