

November 5, 2017

**ISSUE:** Workers rights and equal opportunity

Whether you are entering the job market for the first time, or were recently terminated, it is important to understand your rights as a worker. Federal and State governments have enacted a range of employment laws which protect employees from discriminatory treatment, unfair labor practices and unsafe working conditions. One example of an employment adverse action occurs when an employee is fired for an illegal reason. Under federal law, employees may not be terminated on the basis of their race, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or age. Employers who do so may be subject to civil liability for wrongful termination. The ban on discrimination also applies to hiring and promotion decisions.

**TEACHING:** What the Church teaches, is in scripture or is the position of the Archdiocese or USCCB:

**Colossians 3:22-24** Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

Human dignity is the same for all human beings: when I trample on the dignity of another, I am trampling on my own. (2/25/14) Pope Francis

**ACTION:** What we can do to promote equality, rights, health, safety and dignity of others:

Know your rights and responsibilities as an employee or an employer. Pray for an end to discriminatory treatment in Employment.

**MORE INFORMATION:**

U.S. EEOC Indiana Civil Rights Commission U.S. Department of Labor

November 12, 2017

**ISSUE:** Workers rights and equal opportunity

Where is the balance in protecting citizens from offenders and protecting the rights of offenders when it comes to employment? A recent Society for Human Resource Management survey revealed that 92% of responding employers conducted criminal records checks on at least some job candidates, while 73% indicated they conducted criminal records checks on all job candidates. While some employers disqualify applicants and employees only for certain offenses, many more simply refuse to consider any applicant who has a criminal record. While appropriate in some situations, this practice has curtailed job opportunities for millions of people, many who have paid their debt to society and are not a danger to society, but still cannot obtain gainful employment.

**TEACHING:** What the Church teaches, is in scripture or is the position of the Archdiocese or USCCB:

[Galatians 6:4-5](#) But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.

In speaking to the Catholic News Agency, Craig DeRoche of the Prison Fellowship stated, "You ask somebody that has done something wrong to square their debt, they do that - that's the right thing for that person. We should want that person to move forward up and away from their old life, and we're doing too much to prevent that in America today".

**ACTION:** What we can do to promote equality, rights, health, safety and dignity of others:

Learn more about Prison Ministry - Archdiocese of Indianapolis Learn more about the "Ban the Box" Initiative through Indianapolis Congregation Action Network (IndyCan)

**MORE INFORMATION:**

U.S. EEOC

Indiana Civil Rights Commission

U.S. Department of Labor

November 19, 2017

**ISSUE:** Workers rights and equal opportunity

Jane Smith and Harry Andrews both work at the XYZ Company. They both perform the exact same job duties in the same facility during the same shift. Their employment backgrounds are very similar (i.e., education and prior work experience), but Jane was hired at XYZ almost a year prior to Harry. Despite being the more senior employee, Jane is paid \$13.50 per hour while Harry earns \$14.95 per hour for performing the same job under the same conditions. In addition to the wage disparity, XYZ also offered Harry a significantly larger amount of life insurance coverage than they offered Jane for the reason that as a male, Harry had a wife and children to care for. What is wrong with this picture?

The right of employees to be free from discrimination in their compensation is protected under several federal laws including the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, among others. The law against compensation discrimination includes payments made to or on behalf of employees as remuneration for employment. All forms of compensation are covered including salary, overtime pay, bonuses, stock options, profit sharing, bonus plans, life insurance, vacation, holiday pay, etc.

**TEACHING:** What the Church teaches, is in scripture or is the position of the Archdiocese or USCCB:

[Ecclesiastes 3:13](#) Also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.

Every civil right rests on the recognition of the first and fundamental right, that of life, which is not subordinate to any condition, be it quantitative, economic or, least of all, ideological.  
(4/11/14) Pope Francis

**ACTION:** What we can do to promote equality, rights, health, safety and dignity of others:

Know your rights and responsibilities as an employee or an employer. Pray for an end to discriminatory treatment in Employment.

**MORE INFORMATION:**

U.S. EEOC Indiana Civil Rights Commission U.S. Department of Labor

November 26, 2017

**ISSUE:** Workers rights and equal opportunity

As an employed worker, you are entitled to certain rights in the workplace - especially ones that keep you safe. These include the right to:

Be trained in a language that you understand;

Be provided with the necessary safety equipment;

Report injury or illness;

Voice your concerns over unsafe working conditions without fear of retaliation.

**TEACHING:** What the Church teaches, is in scripture or is the position of the Archdiocese or USCCB:

**Genesis 3:19** By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Clearly, when a people is not concerned with providing work to its young – and when I say “a people”, I don’t mean governments; I mean the entire people who ought to be concerned whether these young people have jobs or not – that people has no future. Young people become part of the throwaway culture and all of us know that today, under the rule of mammon, things get thrown away and people get thrown away. Children are thrown away because they are not wanted, or killed before they are born. Young people are thrown away because they are not given work. So then, what is left for a young person who has no work? When a country – a people – does not create employment opportunities for its young, what is left for these young people if not forms of addiction, or suicide, or going off in search of armies of destruction in order to make war. (9/20/15) Pope Francis

**ACTION:** What we can do to promote equality, rights, health, safety and dignity of others:

"The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic right of workers must be respected." USCCB (The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers)

**MORE INFORMATION:**

Indiana OSHA

U.S. Department of Labor - OSHA (1-800-321-6742)

