



SB 998 (Gonzalez) Discrimination Prevention Coordinators

SUMMARY

Senate Bill (SB) 998 will define the roles and responsibilities of five Discrimination Prevention Coordinators, who will be housed in the newly created Office of Civil Rights at the Government Operations Agency (GovOps).

EXISTING LAW

Educ. Code § 220 states that no student shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics that is contained in the definition of hate crimes, including immigration status, in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution that receives state financial assistance.

Educ. Code § 244 prohibits the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school from adopting or approving the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use of the textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum would subject a pupil to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Section 220.

Assembly Bill (AB) 715 (Zbur/Addis, 2025) established the Office of Civil Rights at GovOps and established the Anti-Semitism Discrimination Prevention Coordinator.

SB 48 (Gonzalez, 2025) established four Discrimination Prevention Coordinators under the Office of Civil Rights: the Religious Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the Race & Ethnicity Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the Gender Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, and the LGBTQ Discrimination Prevention Coordinator.

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM

The Legislature enacted legislation to establish an Office of Civil Rights under the GovOps Agency. The Legislature also created an Anti-Semitism Discrimination Prevention Coordinator and outlined its roles and responsibilities.

To ensure that all student populations receive equal protection, SB 48 (Gonzalez, 2025) created four additional civil rights coordinators: the Religious Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the Race & Ethnicity Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the Gender Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, and the LGBTQ Discrimination Prevention Coordinator. The Legislature, however, did not include the explicit responsibilities for these four coordinators in the enacting legislation.

Clear guidelines are needed on the responsibilities of these coordinator positions in order for them to provide

educational and technical assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) so they can proactively address incidents of discrimination.

SOLUTION

SB 998 outlines the responsibilities of the Religious Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the Race & Ethnicity Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the Gender Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, the LGBTQ+ Discrimination Prevention Coordinator, and the Disability Discrimination Prevention Coordinator. Amongst other responsibilities, the Discrimination Prevention Coordinators will provide educational support and technical assistance to LEAs to proactively address conflicts related to discrimination based on a person's characteristics.

Additionally, the bill creates a new deputy position in the Office of Civil Rights, on anti-black racism, a deputy on anti-Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) racism, and a deputy on anti-Latino racism. These deputies will work under the Race and Ethnicity Discrimination Prevention Coordinator.

SUPPORT

None at this time.

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