



Lawful Permanent Residents’ Employment Rights Under the Immigration and Nationality Act

If you’re a lawful permanent resident, you have certain protections from employment discrimination under the Immigration and Nationality Act. This fact sheet explains the protections you have under this law from employment discrimination based on citizenship, immigration status, and national origin in:

- hiring,
- firing,
- recruitment, and
- when proving your permission to work in the United States to an employer.

Protections in Hiring, Firing, and Recruiting

An employer that refuses to hire you, or fires you, because you’re a lawful permanent resident or because of your national origin might be violating the law. Employers generally cannot exclude lawful permanent residents, limit jobs only to U.S. citizens, or refuse to hire someone because they were born in another country.

Protections When an Employer is Verifying Your Permission to Work

When you start a new job, employers must use the [Form I-9](#) to verify your permission to work, also known as your authorization to work. Some employers also use [E-Verify](#). If an employer treats you differently when verifying your permission to work based on your citizenship, immigration status, or national origin, the employer might be [violating the law](#). An employer might be violating the law if it:

- ⊗ Asks you to prove your lawful permanent resident status or USCIS/A# for the Form I-9.
- ⊗ Asks you to show a specific document for the Form I-9, such as your Permanent Resident Card or “green card.”
- ⊗ Refuses to accept the valid documents you decide to show for the Form I-9.

Some examples of documents a lawful permanent resident can decide to show for the Form I-9

- State ID + unrestricted Social Security card
- Permanent Resident Card – including cards extended past the expiration date on the card, with an I-797 extension letter
- Foreign passport with an I-551 stamp
- Foreign passport with a Machine-Readable Immigrant Visa with an I-551 notation
- Form I-94 with a photo and an I-551 stamp

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- ⊗ Asks you to show more documentation than is necessary for the Form I-9.
- ⊗ Asks you to show documentation when not required. If you decide to show a valid Permanent Resident Card when you start your job, your employer cannot ask you for a new document when the Permanent Resident Card later expires.
- ⊗ Asks you for more documentation when using E-Verify. Employers should enter information from your Form I-9 when using E-Verify.

When an employer verifies your permission to work, you get to choose which acceptable documentation to present. Your employer should not be deciding that for you.

More [Form I-9 information](#) for lawful permanent residents

Protections Against Retaliation

You're also protected against retaliation. If you talk with the Civil Rights Division's Immigrant and Employee Rights Section (IER) about a work problem, file a complaint with IER, take part in an investigation, or speak up to protect your rights or someone else's rights, an employer cannot use that to:

- ⊗ Fire you
- ⊗ Threaten you
- ⊗ Cut your hours or pay
- ⊗ Take other harmful actions

Call the Civil Rights Division's Immigrant and Employee Rights Section if:

- 📞 You see a job posting that limits hiring to U.S. citizens and you think there is no lawful reason for it.
- 📞 An employer does not hire you, or fires you, because you're a lawful permanent resident, or because of your national origin.
- 📞 Your employer does not let you show the acceptable documentation of your choice when proving your permission to work.
- 📞 Your employer asks for documentation when not required. For example, if your current employer asks for a new Permanent Resident Card when the card expires.
- 📞 Your employer retaliates against you because you speak up for your right to work as protected by this law.

Other federal or state laws may also prohibit discrimination based on citizenship, immigration status, or national origin. For example, the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) enforces an employment law that protects workers from national origin discrimination.

Civil Rights Division, Immigrant and Employee Rights Section (IER)



- Call the Worker Hotline at **1-800-255-7688** | 1-800-237-2515 TTY
- Calls can be anonymous and free language services are available.
- The law IER enforces is found at [8 U.S.C. § 1324b](#).



- To learn more, visit [justice.gov/ier](https://www.justice.gov/ier)