

206 - Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN)

Section 206.01 Purpose The purpose of this policy is to protect against bias and prohibit discrimination based on an individual's hair texture or hairstyle based on characteristics that are to align with Sec. 21.1095 of the Texas Labor Code, commonly or historically associated with race and national origin.

Section 206.02 Scope This policy applies to all employees, contractors, interns, volunteers, applicants and any other individuals associated with Fort Bend County. It encompasses all aspects of the county's activities, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, promotion, discipline, training and interaction within the county.

Section 206.03 Prohibition In accordance with State H.B. 567, CROWN Act of September 1, 2023, no individual shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination based on the individual's hair texture or protective hairstyle, if that hair texture or that protective hairstyle is commonly or historically associated with a particular race or national origin. Protective hairstyles, including but not limited to locs, cornrows, twists, braids, Bantu knots and Afros.

Section 206.04 Protection from Discrimination All individuals are protected from discrimination based on their hair texture, style, or appearance. Discriminatory acts, comments or practices related to these factors are considered violations of this policy.

Section 206.05 Compliance Fort Bend County department heads and elected officials must be aware of their dress code and grooming policies to remain compliant under the CROWN Act.

As an employer, you can:

- I. Set grooming and dress standards for safety purposes.
- II. Require employees adhere to reasonable dress and grooming standards relative to our business.

To ensure compliance with the state CROWN Act, aligned with Sec. 21.1095 of the Texas Labor Code

- I. Eliminating references to expressly prohibited hairstyles.
- II. Applying policies equally to all employees, regardless of race.

FORT BEND COUNTY EMPLOYEE INFORMATION MANUAL

**Section 206.06
Conclusion**

By adopting and adhering to this policy, Fort Bend County reaffirms its dedication to providing an inclusive and respectful environment that upholds the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their hair texture, style, or appearance. Through these efforts, we contribute to a more equitable society that embraces diversity in all its forms.

**Section 206.07
Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance, effectiveness and alignment with evolving best practices and legal requirements. Any necessary revisions will be made to uphold the principles of non-discrimination and inclusion.

Policy Approved and Adopted By:
Fort Bend County Commissioners Court
Approved: September 12, 2023