

HB 8 Passage Ensures Fairness for Pregnant Workers

Women in Illinois can no longer be fired for requesting reasonable accommodations while pregnant, such as carrying a water bottle or requesting a stool to sit on while they work. The same reasonable, temporary accommodations other workers take for granted had been denied to pregnant workers. But not anymore!

HB 8 is a measured approach that prevents employers from unfairly pushing pregnant workers out of their jobs

- Promotes workplace fairness for pregnant workers by requiring employers to make reasonable accommodations for conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions, unless the employer can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the ordinary operation of the employer's business—just as employers do for limitations caused by other conditions.
- Modeled after the Americans with Disabilities Act and analogous state law.
- Treats pregnant workers the same as other workers who are similar in their ability or inability to work—it's not about "special treatment" or "extra" benefits.
- Does not require employers to create new jobs or to fire, transfer an employee with more seniority, or promote an unqualified employee.

HB 8 makes good business sense

- Providing pregnant employees with reasonable, temporary accommodations increases worker productivity, retention, and morale, decreases re-training costs, and reduces health care costs associated with pregnancy complications.

HB 8 was necessary because the prior law was unclear

- Courts and employers continued to deny pregnant workers the kinds of job modifications that they routinely offered to other employees who are similar in their ability or inability to work. This is despite the fact that Illinois and federal law requires employers to provide pregnant workers the same treatment and benefits provided other workers who require temporary accommodations.

HB 8 promotes the economic security and well-being of women and their families

- When a pregnant worker is forced to quit her job, coerced into taking unpaid leave, or fired because her employer refuses to provide a temporary job modification, it can put a serious financial strain on her family.
- Pregnant workers who can't afford to lose their jobs or health insurance may be forced to put their health and pregnancies at risk if their employer refuses to make reasonable accommodations.

