

## Senate Bill No. 400

### CHAPTER 759

An act to amend Sections 230 and 230.1 of the Labor Code, relating to employment.

[Approved by Governor October 11, 2013. Filed with  
Secretary of State October 11, 2013.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 400, Jackson. Employment protections: victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(1) Existing law provides protections to victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. Existing law prohibits an employer from taking adverse employment action against a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault who takes time off from work to attend to issues arising as a result of the domestic violence or sexual assault, as long as the employee complies with certain conditions. Existing law entitles an employee who is discriminated or retaliated against in the terms and conditions of employment by his or her employer because the employee has taken time off for specified purposes, to reinstatement and reimbursement for lost wages and work benefits caused by the acts of the employer. Under existing law, an employer who willfully refuses to rehire, promote, or otherwise restore an employee or former employee who has been determined to be eligible for rehiring or promotion by a grievance procedure or hearing authorized by law is guilty of a misdemeanor. Existing law authorizes an employee who is discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or otherwise discriminated or retaliated against by his or her employer in violation of these provisions to file a complaint with the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement of the Department of Industrial Relations, as specified.

This bill would extend these protections to victims of stalking. The bill would also prohibit an employer from discharging or in any manner discriminating or retaliating against an employee because of the employee's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking if the victim provides notice to the employer of the status or the employer has actual knowledge of the status. The bill would also require the employer to provide reasonable accommodations that may include the implementation of safety measures or procedures for a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as specified. Because a violation of the bill's requirements under certain circumstances would be a crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 230 of the Labor Code is amended to read:

230. (a) An employer shall not discharge or in any manner discriminate against an employee for taking time off to serve as required by law on an inquest jury or trial jury, if the employee, prior to taking the time off, gives reasonable notice to the employer that the employee is required to serve.

(b) An employer shall not discharge or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against an employee, including, but not limited to, an employee who is a victim of a crime, for taking time off to appear in court to comply with a subpoena or other court order as a witness in any judicial proceeding.

(c) An employer shall not discharge or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against an employee who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking for taking time off from work to obtain or attempt to obtain any relief, including, but not limited to, a temporary restraining order, restraining order, or other injunctive relief, to help ensure the health, safety, or welfare of the victim or his or her child.

(d) (1) As a condition of taking time off for a purpose set forth in subdivision (c), the employee shall give the employer reasonable advance notice of the employee's intention to take time off, unless the advance notice is not feasible.

(2) When an unscheduled absence occurs, the employer shall not take any action against the employee if the employee, within a reasonable time after the absence, provides a certification to the employer. Certification shall be sufficient in the form of any of the following:

(A) A police report indicating that the employee was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(B) A court order protecting or separating the employee from the perpetrator of an act of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or other evidence from the court or prosecuting attorney that the employee has appeared in court.

(C) Documentation from a licensed medical professional, domestic violence counselor, as defined in Section 1037.1 of the Evidence Code, a sexual assault counselor, as defined in Section 1035.2 of the Evidence Code, licensed health care provider, or counselor that the employee was undergoing treatment for physical or mental injuries or abuse resulting in victimization from an act of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(3) To the extent allowed by law and consistent with subparagraph (D) of paragraph (7) of subdivision (f), the employer shall maintain the confidentiality of any employee requesting leave under subdivision (c).

(e) An employer shall not discharge or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against an employee because of the employee's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, if the victim provides notice

to the employer of the status or the employer has actual knowledge of the status.

(f) (1) An employer shall provide reasonable accommodations for a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking who requests an accommodation for the safety of the victim while at work.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, reasonable accommodations may include the implementation of safety measures, including a transfer, reassignment, modified schedule, changed work telephone, changed work station, installed lock, assistance in documenting domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking that occurs in the workplace, an implemented safety procedure, or another adjustment to a job structure, workplace facility, or work requirement in response to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or referral to a victim assistance organization.

(3) An employer is not required to provide a reasonable accommodation to an employee who has not disclosed his or her status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(4) The employer shall engage in a timely, good faith, and interactive process with the employee to determine effective reasonable accommodations.

(5) In determining whether the accommodation is reasonable, the employer shall consider an exigent circumstance or danger facing the employee.

(6) This subdivision does not require the employer to undertake an action that constitutes an undue hardship on the employer's business operations, as defined by Section 12926 of the Government Code. For the purposes of this subdivision, an undue hardship also includes an action that would violate an employer's duty to furnish and maintain a place of employment that is safe and healthful for all employees as required by Section 6400 of the Labor Code.

(7) (A) Upon the request of an employer, an employee requesting a reasonable accommodation pursuant to this subdivision shall provide the employer a written statement signed by the employee or an individual acting on the employee's behalf, certifying that the accommodation is for a purpose authorized under this subdivision.

(B) The employer may also request certification from an employee requesting an accommodation pursuant to this subdivision demonstrating the employee's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Certification shall be sufficient in the form of any of the categories described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (d).

(C) An employer who requests certification pursuant to subparagraph (B) may request recertification of an employee's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking every six months after the date of the previous certification.

(D) Any verbal or written statement, police or court record, or other documentation provided to an employer identifying an employee as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking shall be maintained as confidential by the employer and shall not be disclosed by the employer

except as required by federal or state law or as necessary to protect the employee's safety in the workplace. The employee shall be given notice before any authorized disclosure.

(E) (i) If circumstances change and an employee needs a new accommodation, the employee shall request a new accommodation from the employer.

(ii) Upon receiving the request, the employer shall engage in a timely, good faith, and interactive process with the employee to determine effective reasonable accommodations.

(F) If an employee no longer needs an accommodation, the employee shall notify the employer that the accommodation is no longer needed.

(8) An employer shall not retaliate against a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking for requesting a reasonable accommodation, regardless of whether the request was granted.

(g) (1) An employee who is discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or in any other manner discriminated or retaliated against in the terms and conditions of employment by his or her employer because the employee has taken time off for a purpose set forth in subdivision (a) or (b) shall be entitled to reinstatement and reimbursement for lost wages and work benefits caused by the acts of the employer.

(2) An employee who is discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or in any other manner discriminated or retaliated against in the terms and conditions of employment by his or her employer for reasons prohibited in subdivision (c) or (e), or because the employee has requested or received a reasonable accommodation as set forth in subdivision (f), shall be entitled to reinstatement and reimbursement for lost wages and work benefits caused by the acts of the employer, as well as appropriate equitable relief.

(3) An employer who willfully refuses to rehire, promote, or otherwise restore an employee or former employee who has been determined to be eligible for rehiring or promotion by a grievance procedure or hearing authorized by law is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(h) (1) An employee who is discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or in any other manner discriminated or retaliated against in the terms and conditions of employment by his or her employer because the employee has exercised his or her rights as set forth in subdivision (a), (b), (c), (e), or (f) may file a complaint with the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement of the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Section 98.7.

(2) Notwithstanding any time limitation in Section 98.7, an employee may file a complaint with the division based upon a violation of subdivision (c), (e), or (f) within one year from the date of occurrence of the violation.

(i) An employee may use vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time off that is otherwise available to the employee under the applicable terms of employment, unless otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, for time taken off for a purpose specified in subdivision (a), (b),

or (c). The entitlement of any employee under this section shall not be diminished by any collective bargaining agreement term or condition.

(j) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Domestic violence” means any of the types of abuse set forth in Section 6211 of the Family Code, as amended.

(2) “Sexual assault” means any of the crimes set forth in Section 261, 261.5, 262, 265, 266, 266a, 266b, 266c, 266g, 266j, 267, 269, 273.4, 285, 286, 288, 288a, 288.5, 289, or 311.4 of the Penal Code, as amended.

(3) “Stalking” means a crime set forth in Section 646.9 of the Penal Code or Section 1708.7 of the Civil Code.

SEC. 2. Section 230.1 of the Labor Code is amended to read:

230.1. (a) In addition to the requirements and prohibitions imposed on employees pursuant to Section 230, an employer with 25 or more employees shall not discharge or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against an employee who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking for taking time off from work to attend to any of the following:

(1) To seek medical attention for injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(2) To obtain services from a domestic violence shelter, program, or rape crisis center as a result of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(3) To obtain psychological counseling related to an experience of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

(4) To participate in safety planning and take other actions to increase safety from future domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including temporary or permanent relocation.

(b) (1) As a condition of taking time off for a purpose set forth in subdivision (a), the employee shall give the employer reasonable advance notice of the employee’s intention to take time off, unless the advance notice is not feasible.

(2) When an unscheduled absence occurs, the employer shall not take any action against the employee if the employee, within a reasonable time after the absence, provides a certification to the employer. Certification shall be sufficient in the form of any of the categories described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 230.

(3) To the extent allowed by law and consistent with subparagraph (D) of paragraph (7) of subdivision (f) of Section 230, employers shall maintain the confidentiality of any employee requesting leave under subdivision (a).

(c) An employee who is discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or in any other manner discriminated or retaliated against in the terms and conditions of employment by his or her employer because the employee has taken time off for a purpose set forth in subdivision (a) is entitled to reinstatement and reimbursement for lost wages and work benefits caused by the acts of the employer, as well as appropriate equitable relief. An employer who willfully refuses to rehire, promote, or otherwise restore an employee or former employee who has been determined to be eligible for rehiring or promotion by a grievance procedure or hearing authorized by law is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(d) (1) An employee who is discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or in any other manner discriminated or retaliated against in the terms and conditions of employment by his or her employer because the employee has exercised his or her rights as set forth in subdivision (a) may file a complaint with the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement of the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Section 98.7.

(2) Notwithstanding any time limitation in Section 98.7, an employee may file a complaint with the division based upon a violation of subdivision (a) within one year from the date of occurrence of the violation.

(e) An employee may use vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time off that is otherwise available to the employee under the applicable terms of employment, unless otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement, for time taken off for a purpose specified in subdivision (a). The entitlement of any employee under this section shall not be diminished by any collective bargaining agreement term or condition.

(f) This section does not create a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under, or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 2601 et seq.).

(g) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Domestic violence” means any of the types of abuse set forth in Section 6211 of the Family Code, as amended.

(2) “Sexual assault” means any of the crimes set forth in Section 261, 261.5, 262, 265, 266, 266a, 266b, 266c, 266g, 266j, 267, 269, 273.4, 285, 286, 288, 288a, 288.5, 289, or 311.4 of the Penal Code, as amended.

(3) “Stalking” means a crime set forth in Section 646.9 of the Penal Code or Section 1708.7 of the Civil Code.

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.