

## California Harassment Training Deadline Extended

September 10, 2019

Last year, California significantly expanded its requirements for employers to train employees on preventing sexual harassment in the workplace. As explained [in a previous Cooley alert](#), SB 1343 required employers with five or more employees to provide supervisory employees with at least two hours of interactive sexual harassment training and nonsupervisory employees at least one hour of interactive sexual harassment training by January 1, 2020. That bill required that the training take place within six months of hire or promotion and every two years after that. SB 1343 also required that the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) develop one- and two-hour online training courses, informational posters and fact sheets and make them available online and in multiple languages.

After the bill passed, employers had several questions about how to comply. Most importantly, it appeared that employers that had trained supervisors in 2018 would need to train them again in 2019 to meet the January 1, 2020, deadline. The DFEH subsequently published FAQs, which suggested that employers would need to train *all* employees in 2019 – even those who had been trained in 2018 – to comply with SB 1343's deadline.

In response, a committee of the California Legislature drafted emergency legislation, known as SB 778, to clarify this issue. SB 778 passed unanimously in the legislature, and Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the bill into law earlier this week, effective immediately.

First, SB 778 gives employers an extra year to comply with the new training requirements by extending the deadline from January 1, 2020, to January 1, 2021. This extended deadline also gives employers a chance to decide whether they would like to use the DFEH's training materials, which are due to be published in late 2019, or create their own.

Furthermore, SB 778 explains that employers that trained their employees in 2018 are not required to provide additional training in 2019. Rather, they can wait until two years from the time the employee was trained. All employees will receive training every two years from now on.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions about the new law or how to comply.

This content is provided for general informational purposes only, and your access or use of the content does not create an attorney-client relationship between you or your organization and Cooley LLP, Cooley (UK) LLP, or any other affiliated practice or entity (collectively referred to as "Cooley"). By accessing this content, you agree that the information provided does not constitute legal or other professional advice. This content is not a substitute for obtaining legal advice from a qualified attorney licensed in your jurisdiction and you should not act or refrain from acting based on this content. This content may be changed without notice. It is not guaranteed to be complete, correct or up to date, and it may not reflect the most current legal developments. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. Do not send any confidential information to Cooley, as we do not have any duty to keep any information you provide to us confidential. This content may be considered **Attorney Advertising** and is subject to our [legal notices](#).

Frederick Baron Palo Alto	fbaron@cooley.com +1 650 843 5020
Ann Bevitt London	abevitt@cooley.com +44 (0) 20 7556 4264
Wendy Brenner Palo Alto	brennerwj@cooley.com +1 650 843 5371
Leslie Cancel San Francisco	lcancel@cooley.com +1 415 693 2175
Helenanne Connolly Reston	hconnolly@cooley.com +1 703 456 8685
Joshua Mates San Francisco	jmates@cooley.com +1 415 693 2084
Gerard O'Shea New York	goshea@cooley.com +1 212 479 6704
Bronwyn L. Roberts Boston	broberts@cooley.com +1 617 937 2434
Michael Sheetz Boston	msheetz@cooley.com +1 617 937 2330
Lois Voelz Palo Alto	lvoelz@cooley.com +1 650 843 5058
Summer Wynn San Diego	swynn@cooley.com +1 858 550 6030

---

This information is a general description of the law; it is not intended to provide specific legal advice nor is it intended to create an attorney-client relationship with Cooley LLP. Before taking any action on this information you should seek professional counsel.

Copyright © 2023 Cooley LLP, 3175 Hanover Street, Palo Alto, CA 94304; Cooley (UK) LLP, 22 Bishopsgate, London, UK EC2N 4BQ. Permission is granted to make and redistribute, without charge, copies of this entire document provided that such copies are complete and unaltered and identify Cooley LLP as the author. All other rights reserved.

