

CLIENT NEWS BRIEF

Two New Laws Add Duties Regarding Student Sexual Harassment Policies And Domestic Violence Resource Information

The Governor has signed legislation that promotes student safety by providing additional resources for combating sexual harassment and domestic violence.

Assembly Bill (AB) 543: Student Sexual Harassment Policy Posters

Starting January 1, 2020, schools serving grades 9-12 must create and display posters that notify students of the school's student sexual harassment policy. AB 543 requires that the posters be age appropriate, culturally relevant, no smaller than 8.5 by 11 inches, in at least 12-point font, and displayed in English and in any primary language spoken by 15 percent or more of the students enrolled at the school. Schools may partner with local, state, or federal agencies, or nonprofit organizations to design and create the poster. AB 543 applies to school districts, county offices of education and charter schools.

The posters must include, at a minimum: (1) the procedures and contact information of the appropriate schoolsite official for reporting sexual harassment; (2) the rights of the reporting student, complainant, and respondent; and (3) the schoolsite's responsibilities under the policy.

The posters must be displayed prominently and conspicuously in each schoolsite bathroom and locker room. The governing board has full discretion to select other appropriate locations where it may choose to display the posters, such as in classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

Currently, California educational institutions are required to display their sexual harassment policies in prominent campus locations where similar notices are posted, and copies must be distributed to parents at the beginning of the school year and as part of any orientation program for new students. Under AB 543, the policy must also be provided as part of any orientation program for new or continuing students at the beginning of each quarter, semester or summer session, as applicable.

Senate Bill (SB) 316: Student Identification Cards - Domestic Violence Hotline

Currently, the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline must be included on student identification cards issued by public schools, including charter schools, and private schools serving students in any of grades 7 to 12, and public and private colleges and universities that issue student identification cards. (See [2018 Client News Brief Number 78](#).) The Crisis Text Line, and a local suicide prevention hotline phone number may also be included. Colleges and universities may also include the campus police or security phone numbers, if applicable, or the local nonemergency phone number.

Beginning October 1, 2020, SB 316 requires schools serving students in any of grades 7 to 12, that issue student identification cards, to also print the telephone number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-7233, on either side of their student identification cards.

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Similarly, commencing October 1, 2020, public and private colleges and universities that issue student identification cards must have printed on either side of their student identification cards the National Domestic Violence Hotline number or a local domestic violence hotline that provides confidential support services by telephone 24 hours a day.

These new requirements apply when student identification cards are issued for the first time or when lost or damaged cards are replaced.

Schools and colleges that have a supply of unissued student identification cards as of January 1, 2020, that do not include the new information, must continue to issue those identification cards until that supply is depleted.

It is worth noting that Assembly Bill 624 proposed that a sexual assault hotline number also be included on student identification cards, but this proposed act was vetoed by the Governor.

These new laws both take effect on January 1, 2020, and that is the date by which the student sexual harassment policy poster requirements under AB 543 must be implemented. October 1, 2020, is the deadline for carrying out SB 316's new student identification card requirements.

If you have questions regarding fulfilling these new obligations or regarding student safety in general, please contact the author of this Client News Brief or an attorney at one of our [eight offices](#) located statewide. You can also subscribe to our [podcast](#), follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) or download our [mobile app](#).