

THIS IS NOT LEGAL ADVICE

State Resources

Ohio

Civil Rights Commission

<https://civ.ohio.gov/about/anti-discrimination-laws>

Reviewing Your

OHIO

Job Offer

Federal Resources

Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission

<http://www.eeoc.gov>

Does your job offer require that you sign a non-compete agreement?

While non-compete agreements are generally enforceable in Ohio, courts may deem a particular non-compete agreement as being unenforceable if it is unreasonable. Factors that may lead a court to deem a particular non-compete agreement to be unreasonable may include whether the provisions are tied to a legitimate business interest; whether there is an undue hardship on the employee; and whether the provisions would be considered to harm to the public interest.

Does your salary match the salary of your co-workers?

Ohio law prohibits discrimination in payment of wages, providing that, "(A) No employer, including the state and political subdivisions thereof, shall discriminate in the payment of wages on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or ancestry by paying wages to any employee at a rate less than the rate at which the employer pays wages to another employee for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar conditions." and "(B) Nothing in this section prohibits an employer from paying wages to one employee at a rate different from that at which the employer pays another employee for the performance of equal work under similar conditions on jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility, when the payment is made pursuant to any of the following: (1) A seniority system; (2) A merit system; (3) A system which measures earnings by the quantity or quality of production; (4) A wage rate differential determined by any factor other than race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or ancestry." See Ohio Revised Code Title 41 Chapter 4111.17.

Additionally, the National Labor Relations Act prohibits the rights of any employee covered by the Act to discuss wages in face-to-face conversations and written messages. While employers may have policies against the use of company equipment when using some types of electronic communications, like social media, it is still the case that policies that specifically prohibit the discussion of wages are themselves unlawful.

Assuming your employment is "at will," can you negotiate for contractual protections?

It is not common to negotiate for additional contractual protections, but this is a question that should especially be reviewed for potential employees seeking executive level positions as well as positions that require an employee with specialized skills. For these situations, it is recommended to seek advice of an attorney. And further to these general factors, employees may also be able to negotiate for various job benefits, such as training opportunities. Even when it is not possible to negotiate for benefits that are governed by company-wide policies, such as perhaps retirement benefits or health benefits, it is often beneficial to compare and consider these benefits when assessing multiple job offers.

Have you properly excluded your individual inventions prior to accepting your job offer?

As an initial matter, inventor(s) are presumed to be owners of any patent rights that stem from their invention unless those patent rights have otherwise been properly assigned. See 37 CFR 1.41 Inventorship; See Manual of Patent Examination Procedure 2109 Inventorship.

With that said, it is not unusual for employers to ask employees to sign an agreement requiring employees to assign inventions created during the course of their employment to the employer. It is often beneficial for employees who have their own inventions to identify any and all inventions and other intellectual property (IP) to which they intend to retain ownership rights. It is highly encouraged to consult with a lawyer when employees are looking to negotiate a contract that involves the assignment of individual inventions.

Does your job offer require that you sign a forced arbitration agreement?

On March 3, 2022, President Biden signed into law the Ending Forced Arbitration of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Act of 2021, prohibiting employers from enforcing predispute arbitration agreements and class action waivers that concern sexual harassment and sexual assault claims. As a result of this act, employers are not allowed to require claims of sexual harassment or sexual assault be brought in arbitration. Those types of claims may be brought in court, either individually or as collective or class claims, regardless of the existence of an arbitration agreement.

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