

# Hijab in the workplace

Your rights in the event of discrimination due to your hijab



# Discrimination is not okay!



Women who wear a hijab<sup>1</sup> are often discriminated against. That is against the law.

The Ombud for Equal Treatment supports you in taking action against discrimination.

## How does the Equal Treatment Act protect you?

Women must not be discriminated in the workplace because of their hijab. You have the right to a non-discriminatory workplace.

Your employer must take action against harassment in connection with your hijab as soon as they become aware of it.

Discrimination is also forbidden in professional education and training, career counselling and self-employment.

Wearing religious and ideological symbols and clothing can only be restricted in certain exceptional cases.

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1 Hijab refers to covering head and body in accordance with Islamic religious practice, for example in the form of a headscarf.

At my job interview, I was told that my hijab didn't fit with the company. It would "put off customers".

When I started wearing hijab at work, I was pushed by my boss to take it off. He threatened to fire me.

My colleague keeps asking me why I'm actually wearing "that thing". She spreads the rumour that I'm being forced to do so.

Recently, a customer insulted me because of my hijab. My boss stood by and did nothing.

I am an engineer. My career counsellor keeps sending me job advertisements that are far below my qualifications. When I confronted him, he said: "As a woman with a hijab, it's going to be difficult in a technical profession."

# Here is what you can do:

- Document the situation as soon as possible. That way, you still remember clearly what happened.
- Let us advise you and together we will find a suitable solution for your concerns.
- We can help you submit a claim to the Equal Treatment Commission.
- You can also take legal action in court. We recommend getting legal protection before you do this.

## Outside of work

Discrimination based on hijab also occurs in other areas of life, for example when looking for housing, social benefits, at school, in shops and restaurants.

**Contact us in these cases too!**



# We document, advise and support

Do you feel discriminated because of your hijab?

The Ombud for Equal Treatment documents all reported incidents. **We advise you free of charge, independently and confidentially.** We will listen and discuss your legal options with you. We won't take any steps without your consent.

**Interpreters are available for our consultation if needed.**



Call us free of charge: **0800 206 119**



Find out about your rights at  
**[gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at/english](https://gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at/english)**



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