



Fact Sheet: Executive Order No. 82

Governor Cooper is working to help North Carolinians become healthier, better educated, and have more money in their pockets so that they can live more abundant, purposeful lives. The linchpin to achieving that goal is helping North Carolinians find and secure good-paying jobs that sustain families. But too often, pregnant workers are sidelined from their careers when small adjustments would enable them to keep working. Employees deserve the option to continue working throughout their pregnancies in a safe, healthy, and comfortable manner. Supporting pregnant state government employees promotes family health and helps North Carolina recruit and retain a talented workforce to provide the best services to North Carolinians.

What does Executive Order No. 82 do?

Executive Order No. 82 establishes that it is the policy of Governor Cooper's administration to provide pregnant employees with needed workplace protections and modifications. The Executive Order mandates that state agencies provide requested workplace adjustments to pregnant state employees unless providing the adjustments would impose an undue hardship on the agency. It also requires the North Carolina Office of State Human Resources to educate agencies' management and other staff about the agencies' pregnancy protection obligations and employee rights and to take any additional steps required to prevent discrimination, harassment or retaliation against pregnant state employees.

Why is Executive Order No. 82 necessary?

Governor Cooper recognizes that North Carolina state government is made stronger by women, who make up a majority of its workforce. Efforts to improve employee wellness and health are vital to recruiting and retaining the best talent. Research suggests that protections and modifications for pregnant workers [promote physical and mental health](#), [increase workplace productivity, retention, and morale](#), and [reduce the risk of poor birth outcomes](#). Workplace accommodations are often free or low-cost to the employer, and may include providing more frequent or longer breaks, a change in seating or workstation arrangements, and adjustments to uniforms or dress codes.

Whom does Executive Order No. 82 support?

Executive Order No. 82 extends protections and workplace modifications to pregnant employees of any North Carolina department, agency, board, or commission under the oversight of the Governor's Office. Executive Order No. 82 also requires executive branch agencies to promote contractor and subcontractor compliance with the Executive Order, including establishing whether there is existing authority to bar contractors and subcontractors from state contracts for failure to adopt similar protections.

State agencies not under the jurisdiction of the Governor's Office as well as local governments and private employers are encouraged but not required to comply with the Executive Order.

Do other states provide state-level protections for pregnant workers?

Yes, most already do. According to the [United States Department of Labor](#), North Carolina is one of four states in the country that does not provide state-level protection against pregnancy discrimination and one of six states that does not provide state-level provisions for pregnancy accommodations.