



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

As a Student

SUMMARY

- State laws vary greatly but they generally require that your school protect you from harassment and discrimination.
- You have the right to report, and should report, bullying or harassment at school.
- Students have the right to express themselves in their speech and clothing. If you are told to comply with a school policy that you believe is discriminatory, contact CAIR.
- Report bullying or discrimination at school to CAIR.

THIS INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED LEGAL ADVICE.



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Council on American-Islamic Relations



We all have the right to be who we are and study in a safe and accepting learning environment.

NOTE, THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS ARE APPLICABLE TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THOSE RECEIVING PUBLIC FUNDING. IF YOU ATTEND A PRIVATE SCHOOL, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CAIR CHAPTER IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY ISSUES.

DRESS CODE

- + You have the right to wear your hijab or kufi, and otherwise cover as you find appropriate, even if your school has a dress code or uniform requirement
- + If you do not wish to participate in school activities that would require you to remove your hijab or otherwise expose yourself in a way that violates your religious beliefs, such as swimming, your school must provide an alternative activity for you.
- + If you do not wish to participate in an activity that involves close contact with the opposite gender, you can request an accommodation (alternative activity).
- + You have the right to wear more conservative sports clothing while participating in sporting events (e.g. your school cannot stop you from competing in swimming competitions because of your religious decision to wear modest swimwear.)

HOLIDAYS & PRAYERS

- + Schools cannot penalize students for missing school on religious holidays. You should request the day off in advance for Eid holidays.
- + You can pray individually or as a group during the school day. CAIR advises you to choose a time to pray that does not coincide with school activities or class time.
- + A school is not required to provide a designated prayer room, but students must have access to some area appropriate for prayer.
- + You may be permitted to leave school for juma'ah (Friday prayer), but it's not always guaranteed. You must coordinate with school officials if you wish to do this.

BULLYING & HARASSMENT

State laws vary but generally they require schools to:

- + Protect you from harassment and discrimination,
- + Prohibit bullying based on religion, race and nationality. Schools must make their bullying policies public.
- + Have a process in place for investigating bullying complaints. If you tell a teacher or another adult at school that you are getting bullied, they are required to do something to help you.
- + Ensure that you are not penalized for reporting bullying or harassment or for requesting an accommodation for your religious practices.



WHAT IS BULLYING?

- + Bullying can take place in person, through notes, text messages, or online via email or social media.
- + Bullying can range from isolation to verbal insults to physical violence, and usually occurs over an extended period of time.
- + Bullying can take many forms, some common problems that Muslim students face are pulling of headscarf or kufi, pressure to convert to another religion, insulting comments about Islam made in the classroom, and physical abuse.
- + Bullying can be from peer to peer or teacher/administrator to student