Illinois Expands Workplace Protections for Menopause-Related Conditions

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Illinois employers have another workplace accommodation and discrimination law to add to their compliance checklist. On August 7, 2026, Governor JB Pritzker signed the Illinois Menopause Equity and Care Act. Effective January 1, 2027, the law expands employee rights and employer obligations under the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA), with additional health insurance coverage requirements taking effect January 1, 2028.

What the New Law Does

Beginning January 1, 2027, the IHRA will prohibit discrimination and harassment based on "menopause-related conditions." The law defines these conditions broadly to include perimenopause, menopause, and associated medical or symptomatic conditions. Examples include:

- Vasomotor symptoms
- Sleep disruption
- Cognitive changes or mood changes
- Osteoporosis-related changes

Employers may not take adverse employment actions or allow harassment based on an employee's menopause-related condition.

New Accommodation Requirements

The Act also requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for menopause-related conditions, similar to accommodations already available for pregnancy-related conditions.

Potential accommodations may include:

- Flexible scheduling
- Modified work hours
- Temperature- or climate-adjusted workspaces
- Additional breaks
- Seating modifications
- Temporary job restructuring or reassignment where appropriate

As with other accommodation requests, employers should engage in an interactive process to determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided without creating an undue hardship.

Notice and Policy Updates Required

Employers must notify employees of their rights regarding accommodations for pregnancy and menopause-related conditions through required workplace postings and employee policies.

Health Plan Coverage Changes Coming in 2028

The law also includes significant insurance-related provisions.

Effective January 1, 2028, insured individual and group health insurance policies issued, renewed, or amended in Illinois must cover medically necessary evaluation and treatment for perimenopause and menopause in accordance with evidence-based guidelines. Covered services may include hormone therapy, non-hormonal therapies for vasomotor symptoms, and medications for menopause-related osteoporosis.

In addition, group health insurance policies covering more than 25 employees must provide an annual menopause or perimenopause health visit for individuals age 45 and older without cost-sharing, except where necessary to preserve Health Savings Account (HSA) eligibility under federal tax rules.

Employer Action

Employers should begin preparing now for the upcoming requirements:

Before January 1, 2027

- Review and update anti-discrimination and accommodation policies.
- Update employee handbooks to address menopause-related accommodations.
- Ensure required workplace notices and postings are updated when state guidance becomes available.
- Train HR professionals, supervisors, and managers on recognizing and responding appropriately to accommodation requests.

Before January 1, 2028

- Discuss with carriers to understand how insured health plan coverage will be modified.
- Review employee communications and open enrollment materials for required coverage changes.
- Confirm whether plan designs will need adjustments to accommodate the annual menopause/perimenopause health visit requirement.