

Turn to Us

Spring 2021



Baby Bump Blues: *Pandemic Pregnancy Fears and Employment Discrimination*

Being pregnant is never easy, and the COVID-19 pandemic brings new challenges and fears to working mothers-to-be, especially when it comes to job security. While the vaccine distribution might be a sign that some sense of normalcy is around the corner, the immeasurable amount of economic damage sustained by businesses across the Commonwealth this past year has pregnant employees on edge wondering if they can be fired because they're pregnant.

According to the EEOC, pregnancy discrimination involves treating an applicant or employee unfavorably because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth. Under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA), discrimination based on pregnancy is forbidden when it comes to any aspect of employment. This includes hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, and fringe benefits – such as leave and health insurance. The drafters of the PDA did not carve out a pandemic crisis exception that would allow an employer to evade liability for pregnancy discrimination.



I think we can all agree that being pregnant, especially during a world-wide pandemic, is no Swiss picnic. While the full effect of stress on a growing baby during pregnancy is still being explored, **here are 6 tips to help manage stress during the Covid-19 pandemic:**



1. Focus on what you can control.



2. Get a good night's sleep.



3. Practice self-care.



4. Ask for help.



5. Set limits.



6. Talk to a mental health professional.