**Protected Class Definitions**

Protected class under this Policy refers to actual or perceived unless otherwise noted below:

**Age**

The length of time a person has lived. An employee must be at least 40 years old to fall within the protected category. Students are protected from age discrimination in academic situations like admissions decisions and residence hall assignments, regardless of their age.

**Color\***

The pigmentation of one’s skin. An individual can make an allegation of color discrimination or color harassment against someone of the same race or color.

**Creed\***

All aspects of religious beliefs, observances or practices, as well as sincerely-held moral and ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong, and/or addresses ultimate ideas or questions regarding the meaning of existence, as well as the beliefs or teachings of a particular religion, church, denomination or sect. A creed does not include political beliefs, association with political beliefs or political interests, or membership in a political party.

**Disability**

Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual.

**Gender**

Sex, gender identity, and gender expression including a person’s gender-related self-image, appearance, behavior, expression, or other gender-related characteristic, regardless of the sex assigned to that person at birth.

**Gender Expression**

How a person represents or expresses their gender to others through external appearance, characteristics, or behaviors.

**Gender Identity**

The internal deeply-held sense of one’s gender which may be the same as or different from one’s sex assigned at birth.

**Marital Status**

A relationship or a spousal status of an individual, including, but not limited to, being single, cohabitating, engaged, widowed, married, in a civil union, or legally separated, or a relationship or a spousal status of an individual who has had or is in the process of having a marriage or civil union dissolved or declared invalid.

**National Origin or Shared Ancestry\***

A person’s (or a person's ancestors') place of origin or to the physical, cultural, or linguistic characteristics of an ethnic group.

**Political Affiliation**

A person’s membership or association with others in commonality of political purpose and support.

**Political Philosophy**

A person’s belief or endorsement of any system of thought pertaining to public policy or the administration of governmental functions.

**Pregnancy or related conditions**

(1) Pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy or lactation; (2) medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy or lactation; or (3) recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, or related medical conditions.

**Race\***

How individuals may self-identify as a certain ethnic and racial category (sociopolitical constructs) or as multiracial. All racial categories are protected under this Policy. Race also includes hair texture, hair type, or a protective hairstyle commonly or historically associated with race, such as braids, locs, twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, Bantu knots, Afros and headwraps.

**Religion\***

All aspects of religious observance, belief and practice. A person does not have to be a member or follower of a particular organized religion, sect or faith tradition to have a religion.

**Sex**

The labels of “male,” “female,” and/or “intersex” typically assigned at birth and based on anatomy and biology.

**Sexual Orientation**

An individual’s physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction toward people. Examples include, but are not limited to: heterosexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian, pansexual, asexual, queer, demisexual, or questioning.

**Veteran Status**

Refers to anyone who serves or who has served in any branch of the United States armed forces, including students in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). Volunteers for military duty must be treated the same as those who are ordered to active duty.

*\* The university construes* [*antisemitism, Islamophobia, and caste*](https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/additional-definitions) *to be included within the university’s current prohibitions on discrimination or harassment, which may be based on the protected classes of race, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry. All protected classes listed above encompass intersectional identities.*

