

U.S. Constitution Equal Protection Clause

“All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. **No state shall** make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor **deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.**” Amendment 14, Section 1.

Sample State Constitution Equal Protection Clauses

New York

(Current Article 1, Section 11).

“No person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws of this state or any subdivision thereof. No person shall, because of race, color, creed, or religion be subjected to any discrimination in his or her civil rights by any other person or by any firm, corporation, or institution, or by the state or any agency or subdivision of the state.”

(On ballot November 5, 2024)

No person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws of this state or any subdivision thereof. No person shall, because of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, creed, or religion, or sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy, be subjected to any discrimination in their civil rights by any other person or by any firm, corporation, or institution, or by the state or any agency or subdivision of the state pursuant to law.

Nothing in this section shall invalidate or prevent the adoption of any law, regulation, program, or practice that is designed to prevent or dismantle discrimination on the basis of a characteristic listed in this section, nor shall any characteristic listed in this section be interpreted to interfere with, limit, or deny the civil rights of any person based upon any other characteristic identified in this section.

Nevada

“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by this State or any of its political subdivisions on account of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, ancestry or national origin.” (2022)

Rhode Island

“No person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor shall any person be denied equal protection of the laws. No otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of race, gender or handicap be subject to discrimination by the state, its agents or any person or entity doing business with the state. Nothing in this section shall be construed to grant or secure any right relating to abortion or the funding thereof.” [R.I. Const. art. I, § 2 \(1986\)](#).

Connecticut

“No person shall be denied the equal protection of the law nor be subjected to segregation or discrimination in the exercise or enjoyment of his or her civil or political rights because of religion, race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex or physical or mental disability.” [Conn. Const. art. I, § 20 \(1974\)](#).

New Hampshire

“All men have certain natural, essential, and inherent rights — among which are, the enjoying and defending life and liberty; acquiring, possessing, and protecting, property; and, in a word, of seeking and obtaining happiness. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by this state on account of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.” [N.H. Const. pt. I, art. 2 \(1974\)](#).

Massachusetts

“All people are born free and equal and have certain natural, essential and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness. Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged because of sex, race, color, creed or national origin.” [Mass. Const. pt. 1, art. I \(1976\)](#).

Arizona

“This state shall not grant preferential treatment to or discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education or public contracting.” [Ariz. Const. art. II, § 36\(A\)](#).

Michigan

“The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.” [Mich. Const. art. I, § 26\(2\) \(2006\)](#).

Vermont Constitution Common Benefits Clause

Article 7. [Government for the people; they may change it]

That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community, and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single person, family, or set of persons, who are a part only of that community; and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and inalienable right, to reform or alter government, in such manner as shall be, by that community, judged most conducive to the public weal.