

Ford Quoted in JCK Magazine Story on Gender Discrimination Lawsuits Filed Against Employers

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Jackie Ford, a partner in the Vorys Houston and Columbus offices and a member of the labor and employment group, was quoted in a *JCK Magazine* story about policies that Jewelers can put into place to avoid discrimination claims. The story, which was titled “How to Recognize and Combat Discrimination in Your Jewelry Store,” appeared in the June 2014 edition of the magazine.

The story states:

“Jackie Ford, an employment law expert and partner at Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease in Houston, says jewelers can help avoid gender discrimination lawsuits by including policies on pay levels for any given position as well as the specific criteria used for deciding where an employee falls within a pay range. ‘If someone comes in and says, ‘Hey, I’m paid less than my male counterpart,’ you can show the employee how you set the range for the job and explain how you decided where each employee fell within the range,’ says Ford. ‘There might be a perfectly good reason. If you haven’t written it down in advance, it’s hard to show why.’

Criteria can be set using anything that is reasonably job-related, says Ford. What you cannot do is base pay scale on illegal criteria, such as race, gender, religion, pregnancy, and national origin.

‘You might decide that you care more about someone’s sales volume,’ she says. ‘Another jewelry store might care more about years of experience. You can pick any job-related criteria as long as you’re consistent.’

Sometimes, higher or lower salaries are awarded due to factors that fall outside normal procedures, Ford says. ‘For example, someone might come in with bigger qualifications than are required, but at the end of the day, they’re overqualified for the job,’ she says. ‘When you get away from your stated criteria, you run a risk.’”

To read the entire story, visit the *JCK Magazine* [website](#).

