

# The Crown Act: The Cost of Ethnic Hair

On January 1, 2020, California became the first state to pass an anti-discrimination hair law for schools and the workplace. The Crown Act (Create a Respectful and Open Workplace for Natural Hair).

Kumasi Aaron, and Jobina Fortson, African American news anchors from San Francisco KGO ABC7, shared their own stories about having to straighten their hair or wear wigs to conform with a more European look in order to advance their TV journalism careers. And anchor, Ama Daetz, explained why she finally stopped straightening her naturally curly hair.

**“People have lost jobs, sources of income because of how they chose to wear their hair.” – Kumasi Aaron**

“It can cost more than \$250 for me to do my hair on one visit. It’s very expensive to maintain, especially straight hair. And it takes about an hour to maintain each night.” – Jobina Fortson

To conform to the workplace standards, many women of color, in particular, spend large sums of money on European hairstyles, risk their hair health, and find time-consuming maintenance routines part of an unspoken job description.

In my view, a costly workplace standard should be compensated. Since 2021, only seven more states have passed the Crown Act.



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