

## ADVERTISING FOR EMPLOYEES

By Karen Sutherland

Employers cannot use a sex-specific job title or otherwise discriminatory language in the job application, advertisements, job announcements or job descriptions, unless the employer can establish the applicability of a bona fide occupational requirement. The Washington Administrative Code, WAC 162-16-260, offers the following examples of phrases to avoid using and substitutes for them:

### Discriminatory job titles:

Barmaid  
Busboy, tray girl  
Cleaning woman, cleaning lady  
Draftsman  
Fireman  
Fisherman  
Foreman  
Handyman  
Journeyman  
Leadman  
Longshoreman  
Maid  
Maintenance man  
Policeman  
Repairman  
Salesman, saleslady, salesgirl  
  
Stewardess, Steward

### Suggested substitutes:

Server, Cocktail Server  
Busser, Cafeteria Worker  
Cleaning Assistant  
Drafter, AutoCAD Specialist  
Fire Fighter  
Fisher  
Supervisor  
Miscellaneous Repairer  
Journey Level  
Crew, Shift, or Team Leader  
Longshore Worker  
Domestic Helper, Housekeeper  
Maintenance Worker  
Police Officer  
Repairer, Technician  
Salesperson, Sales Clerk,  
Sales Representative  
Flight Attendant, Cabin Attendant

### Discriminatory terms in advertisements:

Man, woman, girl, boy, lady, etc.  
  
Cute, handsome, pretty, clean-cut,  
attractive  
Married, single  
Recent graduate, college student  
(implies preference for youth)  
Mother, housewife  
Young  
Christian, Jewish, etc.  
Interracial, segregated, Black, etc.

### Suggested substitutes:

Person, applicant, hiree, one, trainee,  
or a sex-neutral job title  
Neat, well-groomed, personable,  
professional appearance  
No substitutes  
Degree required, Internship  
  
Part-time, short hours  
Entry level, beginner, trainee  
No substitutes  
Person, applicant, etc.

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*This brief article is a broad summary only. It lacks specificity about the law and about the effects of different fact patterns, and thus shall not be applied without consulting an attorney. It also focuses on Washington State law and federal law, and the laws of other jurisdictions may vary materially. The information set forth in this article is a broad and general overview of complex topics, and is not legal advice. It also does not take into account any changes to the law or in interpretations of the law that may have occurred since it was written. For more information, contact Karen Sutherland at [ksutherland@omwlaw.com](mailto:ksutherland@omwlaw.com)*