

COVID COASTER: Surviving the Ride and Thriving When the Ride Ends

AGENDA

8:00
10:45a **Welcome & Opening Session – Legal Update & All Things Covid**

Welcome and Introductions - Jennifer Will

Update on Vaccines, Mandates, Restrictions - Andrew Levy and Ursula Siverling
Employers are faced with legal and practical challenges as they adjust COVID-19 restrictions and mitigation measures in response to changes in the case rates and other circumstances. Will there be a “new normal”, and if so, what is it? This session will provide an update on key issues and laws that employers need to be aware of regarding COVID-19 and vaccines in the workplace, including best practices for managing vaccine mandates, mask requirements, and religious and medical exemption requests.

OSHA Investigations: An Employer’s Survival Guide - Eric Athey, Micah Saul and Austin Wolfe

The mere thought of being investigated by OSHA is enough to make an employer shudder. Whether it’s the scope of the inspection and number of employee interviews, the volumes of records to produce, or the potential for significant penalties, the process can be overwhelming. In this session, we’ll discuss what to expect – and what to do – in order to prepare for and successfully handle an OSHA investigation.

COVID’s Impact on Benefits - Renée Lieux

In this benefits update, we will discuss COVID’s impact on employee benefits, assess where we are now and cover welfare plan and health plan current issues.

COVID Litigation Update/What to Anticipate - Mark Hipple and Abbigael Giunta

From masking to vaccine mandates, nationwide injunctions to state specific stays, 2021 was filled with a flurry of litigation in the labor and employment arena. We will discuss some of the key litigation trends that emerged in 2021 and will preview what we see on the horizon for 2022 and beyond. We will review examples of significant cases from 2021 that impact the workplace. We will also discuss continued changes to the litigation landscape because of COVID and the current administration’s focus on increased regulations and aggressive enforcement of workplace laws.

10:45
11:00a **Break**

11:00a
12:00p **Disability and Religious Accommodations**

Presented by Denise Elliott, Kelley Kaufman and Jennifer Will
Feeling frustrated by accommodation requests from your post-pandemic workforce? Does a request to accommodate medical marijuana use or a mental health condition seem more complicated than a simple request for light duty? Are you dealing with religious accommodation requests for the first time in years, or maybe for the first time ever? Let us help ease the frustration. This session will help you apply the tools and the rules you already know to the most common post-pandemic accommodation requests.

12:00
12:45p **Lunch**

12:45
2:00p **Social Justice and the Workplace – Do Employees Have Rights? Everything Old is New**

Presented by Shaun Henry, Brittany Jones and Anne Zerbe

Societal upheaval has been around forever. Its far-reaching impact on employers, fueled by social media and PR platforms, is new and more challenging than ever. These issues affect the workplace like never before. Join us as we explore employer best practices for addressing social justice concerns. Plus - hear expert advice from guest presenter, Brett Marcy, President, Apollo Communications, on managing a social media and PR crises.

2:00
3:00p **Retaliation: The Fastest Way to Get Fired . . . and Sued**

Presented by Gregory Archibald, Adam Long and Langdon Ramsburg

Most employment laws have anti-retaliation provisions, and employee protections in this area are broad. Whether it is taking medical leave, raising concerns about perceived discrimination or harassment, claiming to have experienced a work-related injury, questioning pay practices, expressing safety concerns, or many other types of actions, employees engage in activities protected by the anti-retaliation laws all the time. And often innocent employment actions may trigger a retaliation claim. In this session, we will discuss the broad array of activities protected by the anti-retaliation laws, how to spot potentially thorny situations, and best practices to minimize the risk of retaliation claims.

3:00
3:15p **Break**

3:15
4:15p **War for Talent: Recruitment Strategies, Creative Compensation & Battles Over Noncompetes**

Presented by William Boak and Adam Santucci

The battle to recruit and retain employees is at a fevered pitch. Companies are employing unprecedented strategies to fill openings and retain key employees. Other companies are looking to lure talent away from the competition and are willing to go to the mat over non-compete agreements. We will break down the developing trends in recruitment and retention, as well as the latest on post-employment restrictive covenants.

4:15 **Closing Remarks by Eric Athey**