

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

Employment and Benefits

Today's law imposes heavy demands on employers and grants employees many avenues for filing legal claims, making legal guidance necessary if employers and their employees are to maintain productive relationships. Multidisciplinary by design, this practice area helps businesses to quell workplace concerns before they snowball into conflict—or worse, litigation—to establish employment policy and to render executive compensation plans attractive and competitive. Our attorneys also negotiate and draft numerous contracts, from employment and termination agreements for executives to confidentiality and non-compete agreements for employees at all levels.

For both union and nonunion environments, we counsel on every aspect of employee relations and benefit plans. We have helped many employers to evaluate and develop policies and manuals that address a wide variety of personnel concerns—from hiring to firing, drug testing to family leave. Counseling on employee relations includes apprising a company of its obligations under anti-discrimination laws, occupational safety and health requirements, overtime and work limitations, affirmative action compliance programs, restrictive covenants and employment-related legislation on the state and local levels. Advising on employee benefits includes informing employers about the legal requirements governing family and medical leave, accommodations for the disabled, tax-qualified benefit plans, post-employment continuation of health insurance and other relevant matters.

That compensation plans be competitive and well structured is understood. We represent employers, executives, directors and consultants regarding all aspects of compensation, from golden parachutes to severance packages. Our attorneys have designed and implemented a full range of compensation programs, including stock options, stock appreciation rights, phantom stock, restricted stock, incentive bonuses, cafeteria plans, nonqualified deferred compensation and qualified pension, 401(k) and profit-sharing plans.

Creating successful company policy and compensation programs is a binary process: first we must identify organizational goals and employee expectations; next we must develop criteria for evaluating performance and rewarding productivity. At the least, we can minimize a company's exposure to employee claims.

Maintaining good employee relations and competitive benefits is key in attracting and retaining talented personnel. This aspect of capital management demands legal counsel capable of assessing internal dynamics and of advising on policy and programs calculated to succeed.

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THIS PRACTICE AREA**

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