

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ALERT

1/13/15

### Three Ways to Ensure a Safe Start to 2015

With the changing of the calendar comes a new year and new challenges for businesses across the country. Following these three tips is a great way to ensure that 2015 gets off to a safe start for both you and your employees.

#### Review your OSHA requirements

January 1, 2015 is particularly important from an OSHA standpoint, as it marks the effective date of the new injury and fatality reporting requirements. Under the new rule, employers must report all work-related fatalities within eight hours of their occurrence. Employers must also report all work-related hospitalizations of one or more employees, eye losses, and amputations within 24 hours. It is worth noting that under the new rule, employers do not have to report a hospitalization if it is for diagnostic testing or observation only.

#### Update your employee handbook

An out-of-date employee handbook can open you up to a host of issues, from wrongful termination and harassment suits to drawing the ire of the National Labor Relations Board. Setting out the policies of your workplace in detail is absolutely vital to the smooth operation of a business and the avoidance of unnecessary litigation. It would be a prudent move to review, revise, and update your employee handbook regularly to better reflect both changes in the law and changes in your business.

#### Keep abreast of any wage law changes in your state

With a new year come changes to wage laws across the country. If you own a business in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, or Washington, be advised that your minimum wage increased as of January 1, 2015. Many states implemented minimum wage changes midway through 2014 and into 2015. If you are in the hospitality industry, you should pay particular attention to any revisions related to tipped employee minimum wage, as changes to the standard minimum wage may differ from those for tipped employees.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the following Roetzel employment attorneys should you have any questions regarding any of the above topics or other concerns related to your business.

**Doug Spiker**  
Practice Group Manager,  
Employment Services  
216.696.7125 | [dspiker@ralaw.com](mailto:dspiker@ralaw.com)

**Karen Adinolfi**  
330.849.6773 | [kadilolfi@ralaw.com](mailto:kadilolfi@ralaw.com)

**Matt Austin**  
614.723.2010 | [maustin@ralaw.com](mailto:maustin@ralaw.com)

**Aretta Bernard**  
330.849.6630 | [abernard@ralaw.com](mailto:abernard@ralaw.com)

**Robert Blackham**  
216.615.4839 | [rblackham@ralaw.com](mailto:rblackham@ralaw.com)

**Eric Bruestle**  
513.361.8292 | [ebruestle@ralaw.com](mailto:ebruestle@ralaw.com)

**Denise Hasbrook**  
419.254.5243 | [dhasbrook@ralaw.com](mailto:dhasbrook@ralaw.com)

**Paul Jackson**  
330.849.6657 | [pjackson@ralaw.com](mailto:pjackson@ralaw.com)

**Doug Kennedy**  
614.723.2004 | [dkennedy@ralaw.com](mailto:dkennedy@ralaw.com)

**Alex Kipp**  
216.820.4204 | [akipp@ralaw.com](mailto:akipp@ralaw.com)

**Nathan Pangrace**  
216.615.4825 | [npangrace@ralaw.com](mailto:npangrace@ralaw.com)

**Marcus Pringle**  
216.696.7077 | [mpringle@ralaw.com](mailto:mpringle@ralaw.com)

**Emily Wilcheck**  
419.254.5260 | [ewilcheck@ralaw.com](mailto:ewilcheck@ralaw.com)

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