

NEW LEGISLATION EVERY CALIFORNIA EMPLOYER SHOULD BE AWARE OF...

Leading Labor Law Experts at Fisher & Phillips LLP Offer Insight Into Legislative Changes and Impacts

The beginning of 2007 marks several important changes to California legislature. However, today's complex and ever-changing labor and employment laws can overwhelm even the most legally astute employers. Which laws are applicable, what steps are recommended to avoid litigation, and how to stay in compliance while still maximizing profits are just a few of the issues that employers today must address.

Fisher & Phillips, founded in 1943, is one of the oldest and largest law firms in the U.S. exclusively representing employers in labor and employment law disputes and to advising them how to protect themselves and their interests. The Irvine, California office of the firm – one of 17 nationwide – consists of a diverse and talented group of attorneys whose combined expertise covers the broad spectrum of labor and employment law issues.

Fisher & Phillips' spokespersons are available to address the newest and most relevant legislative updates, including some of the most talked about laws taking effect January 1, 2007 such as:

- **The Minimum Wage Increase** – It is undisputed that the legislation to have the greatest effect on employers in 2007 is the California increase in minimum wage. The new law will put into effect a minimum wage increase of \$1.25 over the next 16 months to \$8.00 per hour. *But who is affected and who is exempt? What industries will be most impacted? And what does this mean for employees who are paid more than minimum wage?* Fisher & Phillips spokespeople explore the far-reaching implications of this new law, and shed light on the surprising employee classification issue that has become one of employers' most common pitfalls.
- **Sexual Harassment Prevention Training** – There has been great criticism of Assembly Bill 1825 because it required a mandatory two hours of harassment prevention training for any supervisor overseeing a California-based employee regardless of where that supervisor was stationed. New amendments to this law provides employers relief by limiting the scope of this law, and training is now only required for those supervisors located in the state of California. Fisher & Phillips' seasoned attorneys are available to provide insight into these changes to sexual harassment training requirements, as well as to provide the required training to supervisors.
- **Workplace Violence Temporary Restraining Order Requirements** – Changes to the California *Code of Civil Procedure* now permit employers the additional right of obtaining a temporary restraining order on behalf of employees other than the one directly threatened. This new law addresses the situation where an employee who is directly threatened does not wish to pursue a restraining order, but the employer feels there is a credible threat of violence against other employees in the workplace. Fisher & Phillips spokespeople can shed light on this new law, discuss employer obligations, and provide managers the tools to effectively investigate and respond to employee complaints.
- **A Look Ahead...Cell Phone Legislation** – Beginning July 1, 2008, California drivers will not be allowed to drive while talking on a wireless telephone unless it is designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking operation, and is used in that manner while driving. Companies with employees who conduct business over the telephone while driving should consider amendments to the company's cell phone usage policies to ensure that employees do not use their cell phone for company business while driving. Fisher & Phillips representatives can provide advice now, for employers updating their employee manuals and procedures for 2008.

Experts are available to address these and other timely labor and employment law topics, including disabilities and reasonable accommodations, employee leaves of absence, workplace violence, and issues specific to certain industries, including: retail, automotive, education, and hospitality.

Fisher & Phillips has developed a long-standing and nationally recognized expertise in labor and employment law in order to protect the rights of employers. Fisher & Phillips offers a wide range of services to private and public sector clients, both unionized and non-unionized. With a focus on both preventive counseling and defense of claims, the firm addresses the business and legal objectives of employers in a way that optimizes their clients' performance in today's changing marketplace. To learn more about Fisher & Phillips, visit www.laborlawyers.com.

To schedule an interview with representatives at the Irvine office of Fisher & Phillips, contact Beth J. Passarella at (714)573-0899, ext. 26 or beth@echomediapr.com.