

THE SPARK PLUG

Virginia Automotive Association's Twice Monthly Member Update

Number One Goal for 2024

Reduce Employment Liability

As employers are continued to be targeted by federal and state government agencies and attorneys, it behooves all employers, no matter how many employees, to ensure effective human resource systems to reduce employment liability. Employment liability in terms of fines, penalties, settlements, back wages and attorney fees continues to be the number one (1) financial liability for all employers no matter the industry or state.

Based on SESCO's 78-year history in assisting employers in preventing employment liability as well as defending employers before federal and state agencies and attorneys, the following are recommendations to meet your 2024 goal of reducing employment liability.

1. Effective and Compliant Employee Handbook- Most employers have implemented an employee handbook. However, when our attorneys review client handbooks, a significant majority are out of date. This includes not only being non-compliant but also not being an effective communications tool. We strongly recommend that you "dust" off your employee handbook and have a SESCO attorney conduct a thorough review with a follow-up report of suggestions. The employee handbook is the cornerstone of the employer-employee relationship and is your first priority in reducing employment liability.

If you do not have an employee handbook, get one. SESCO staff prepares hundreds of handbooks annually and this service is a major part of our offerings. SESCO retainer clients receive a free handbook review annually.

2. Conduct an Employment Law Audit- One of SESCO's primary services is assisting our clients in ensuring compliance with federal and state employment regulations. SESCO's proven employment law audit will identify any liability associated with managing your human resources and in complying in federal and state employment regulations.

The audit covers wage and hour, EEO, FMLA, ADA, Immigration, personnel forms and files, employment documentation and other areas. All audits are followed up with a thorough, written report with SESCO recommendations. Email SESCO for a free copy of our audit checklist.

This audit can be conducted on or offsite. For SESCO retainer clients there is no charge. The only charge would be for an onsite audit and that charge would be travel expenses at cost.

3. Train All Managers- Once an issue or concern reaches top management, the owner or HR's desk, it may be too late. It is critical that all managers, even frontline supervisors, understand the basics of employment regulations and the do's and don'ts.

Most employment liability is created by an inappropriate discussion, ignoring an issue, or handling an issue inappropriately, by supervisors. It is not intentional, but, simply, managers do not understand the basics.

This training can be conducted on or offsite with SESCO retainer clients receiving the training at no cost, less travel expenses if conducted onsite. The intent of the training is not to make experts out of managers but to simply inform them so they will know when to come to leadership and/or HR.



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