



Learning Curves

News

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Atlanta Partner John Thompson was quoted in the article “Learning Curves” in the May 2013 issue of *InsideCounsel*. The article focused on the litigation risks that employers face when taking on unpaid interns and the recent surge of well-publicized lawsuits involving compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and state wage and hour laws. Some companies are discontinuing the practice of hiring unpaid interns or reducing the number of interns in order to pay those who do come on board at minimum wage. The Department of Labor highlighted the issue in a 2010 Fact Sheet, which set out criteria for unpaid internship programs. An internship must be designed for the benefit of the intern rather than the company. John noted that it’s important that the intern isn’t doing work that a regular employee would otherwise handle. “An ad that says ‘we need an intern’ is a danger signal. That means, ‘we have work we don’t want to pay for, so we are looking for a free worker.’ The minute that mindset is developed, you know you’ve got trouble.”

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