

FOX RULING WARNS COS. OF PITFALLS IN HIRING INTERNS

News

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John Thompson, a partner in the Atlanta office and editor of the firm's *Wage & Hour Laws Blog*, was quoted in the June 14 *Law360* article "[Fox Ruling Warns Cos. Of Pitfalls In Hiring Interns.](#)"

The article noted that a recent ruling that a pair of Fox Searchlight Pictures, Inc. interns should have been classified as employees should remind employers to remain wary of the potential wage-and-hour dangers that go along with bringing on unpaid workers.

With lawsuits over internships gaining popularity, the ruling on the two interns' status should serve as a warning to employers to take care in crafting their intern programs and to review their existing practices.

John said: "There is a reasonable but unfortunately often mistaken belief that under wage-and-hour laws, consenting adults can agree to what the nature of the relationship is.

There's a limit on that where the FLSA is concerned." Employers must be sure their unpaid internship programs fit within the narrow exception to wage-and-hour laws, or they could find themselves facing costly wage-and-hour litigation.

He added, "If your motivation for having an unpaid intern is something like 'we could sure use an intern this summer,' that's already a danger signal."