

## Attorneys Offer Advice on Maximizing Handbook Effectiveness, Avoiding Pitfalls

News

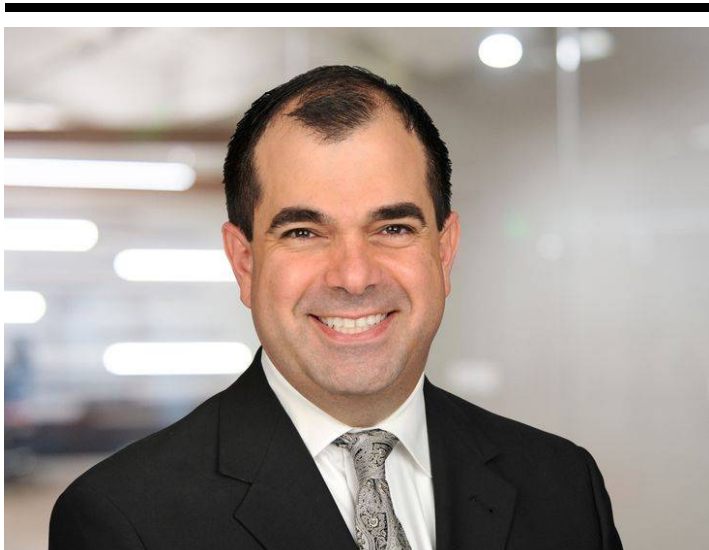
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Lonnie Giamela, a partner in the Los Angeles and Irvine offices, was quoted on July 8 by [\*Bloomberg BNA Human Resources\*](#) in the article “Attorneys Offer Advice on Maximizing Handbook Effectiveness, Avoiding Pitfalls.” The article noted that employee handbooks should not be overly broad or have a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Lonnie said that employers also have to make sure the handbook is tailored to the laws of the state in which they operate. All too frequently HR professionals download a template that is federal in nature, but they fail to take into consideration state-specific laws. “Those are the considerations that HR professionals need to be mindful of, because if you have a handbook that does not conform to a state’s laws or requirements, it will be exhibit one or exhibit two in [a litigation] case,” he explained. When it comes to keeping business operations confidential, Lonnie said that many companies are adopting an “unauthorized interview” or outside of the office contact policy. But, he said, employers cannot simply have a blanket policy that says employees are prohibited from speaking to anyone that contacts them about company operations. A blanket policy could be used as evidence of retaliation if an employee is contacted for comment by someone from the government about compliance, or if police are contacting them about criminal activity, he added.

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