



Handling Employee Internet Misuse

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Advances in computer technology and usage increasingly blur the line between work and home. Employees are now using e-mail and internet postings to broadcast information and opinions worldwide. Inevitably, some of those employees will post negative, harassing, hostile, false, or confidential information and opinions about their employers and coworkers. In addressing the risks associated with employee speech on the internet, you will first need to consider when you can *legally* monitor computer sites; when you will *actually* monitor; how you will *notify* your employees of your intent to monitor; and whether any objectionable postings are *legally protected* or instead form a basis for *discipline or discharge*. Navigating these treacherous waters is a daunting task, but if you fail to protect your company's reputation in appropriate cases, you will likely open the door to even more harm.

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