



Employment Law Changes to Deal with in 2015

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Businesses need to prepare for considerable shifts in the employment landscape this year.

Recent National Labor Relations Board rulings, as well as other mandates the board is considering, will make it easier for employees to unionize. Couple these changes with Affordable Care Act implementation and increased Equal Employment Opportunity Commission enforcement, and employers will have to be hyper-vigilant to make sure they stay compliant with government regulations.

In the article, Jim touches on four areas employers need to watch:

1. The NLRB finally has implemented its long-awaited "quickie election" rules, which will speed up union elections. Set to take effect April 14, the new procedures will have a profound impact on union organizing tactics and representation elections.
2. Under the Affordable Care Act, companies with 100 or more full-time employees were required as of Jan. 1 to provide "affordable" employee health coverage. Employers that fail to provide acceptable coverage, which must include premiums of no more than 9.5 percent of the employee's family's adjusted gross income, face penalties of about \$2,000 per employee.
3. Democrats continue to push for a minimum wage increase to \$10 per hour. Even though Republicans are in charge of both houses of Congress, politically they're on the losing side of this argument, and minimum wage battles will continue as the election cycle kicks off. If the minimum wage is raised, it's likely to artificially increase wages for all workers, not just those making minimum wage.
4. The EEOC in its Strategic Enforcement Plan specifies what it considers to be national priorities: LGBT and accommodation issues, removing hiring barriers, failure to respond to harassment claims, and equal pay enforcement, among others. An employer with an issue that falls into one of these categories is at heightened risk of the EEOC's pursuing the case, particularly if the employer has multiple work sites. Targeted companies must take great caution when responding to a claim in one of these national priority categories so they don't unintentionally "invite" the EEOC to come in and look at other issues, too.

To read the full article, please visit [*The Kansas City Star*](#).

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