



Healthcare Co-Chair Shares Best Practices for Employers in the Wake of Omicron Variant

News

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In interviews with Law360 and SHRM, **Kevin Troutman** shares best practices for employers approaching the Omicron variant.

In his conversation with Law360, he advises employers to be intentional in their responses to new information. "If you don't overreact, if you don't react too quickly, you're less likely to have to reverse course," he said. "Get your basic framework in place, which is having policies, knowing how would you implement a masking requirement or vaccination requirement if you had to, but not necessarily doing it if it's not clear that that is something that you have to do at this point."

Additionally, Kevin advises employers to tread carefully when dealing with requests for extended time off and accommodations. "It's always a concern when an employee needs leave, asks for leave, asks for an accommodation, whether it's a religious or medical accommodation. I'm seeing more of those kinds of things, just a failure to accommodate claim, and maybe a retaliation claim."

In the first of two interviews with SHRM, Kevin also said employers should maintain frequent internal communication that keeps staff up-to-date on new developments and policy changes. "Employers should continue to keep their workforce informed about relevant plans, policies and activities, but avoid reacting too quickly to news of a new variant. This has happened before and will likely happen again, so for now it's best to ensure that an appropriate foundational safety plan is in place and continue to monitor news and guidance from trusted sources."

In a second interview with SHRM, Kevin advises employers to make informed decisions about in-person gatherings.

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