



White House Takes Aim at Inefficient Business Practices Through “Time Is Money” Initiative: 5 Things Employers Should Do

Insights

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The Biden Administration wants to crack down on corporate practices that it believes waste consumers’ time and money through excessive paperwork, long wait times, and other aggravations – and you’ll want to take note so you can stay out of the government crosshairs. The August 12 initiative, called “Time Is Money,” primarily targets consumer-facing companies, but it’s important for employers to be aware of the broader implications and potential impact on business practices. Here are five steps employers should consider taking to minimize potential liability.

1. Simplify Subscription and Membership Cancellations

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) proposed a rule earlier this year requiring businesses to make canceling subscriptions or memberships as easy as signing up. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has similarly launched an inquiry aiming to “promote efficiency in customer service in the telecommunications industry” including through simplifying the cancellation process and allowing access to live (human) representatives.

These efforts are the start of a larger effort by regulators to promote greater ability for consumers to get out of existing business arrangements. For employers who offer subscription or recurring billing-based services, you may need to focus on appropriate staffing and training of consumer-facing employees to achieve the goals set by this portion of the initiative.

2. Facilitate Online Health Claims Submissions

The Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Labor (DOL) are calling on health insurance companies and plans to streamline the submission of online health claims. For companies that offer health benefits, be aware that regulators will be applying greater scrutiny to ensure covered employees are able to access and communicate with health plan providers.

3. Address Customer Service “Doom Loops”

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is expected to initiate a rulemaking to require companies to offer customers the option to speak to a human representative easily, with the FCC, HHS and DOL also likely to follow suit. For businesses with automated customer service, recognize

that there is likely to be a renewed push to create requirements that customers have a clear path to reach a live agent. Those with inefficient or time-consuming systems can expect to face potential consequences.

4. Evaluate the Use of Chatbots in Customer Service

The CFPB plans to issue rules to curb ineffective use of chatbots that frustrate customers. If your company uses AI-driven customer service tools, assess their effectiveness and consider providing alternatives to ensure customer satisfaction.

5. Prepare for Ongoing Federal Action

The White House is actively seeking public input on how to further reduce practices that frustrate consumers. Stay informed on developments and be an active participant in the rulemaking process to the extent these proposals may create unnecessary burdens or compliance issues.

Conclusion

The “Time Is Money” initiative underscores the growing federal focus on eliminating consumer frustrations and inefficiencies in business practices. You should be aware that these proposals are mostly still in development, so there is time to help shape the policies that eventually become obligations – whether by participating in the notice and comment rulemaking process or through direct conversations with policymakers.

For more detailed guidance on how these developments might affect your business and how to help shape the rulemaking process, reach out to your FP attorney, the author of this insight, any member of the legislative advocacy team at [FP Advocacy](#), or any member of [our Government Relations](#) team. Make sure that you are subscribed to receive Government Relations news through [Fisher Phillips’ Insights](#) to get the most up-to-date information direct to your inbox.

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