

2018 October Newsletter

Moving toward the end of the year, there are many hot topics to cover including holiday guidelines, compliance updates and end of the year communications. Below are a few that may be helpful.

Voting – If an employee has not already voted in early voting, they are entitled to take paid time off for voting on election day, unless the employee has at least two consecutive hours to vote outside of working hours. Since politics can become a controversial subject, companies should promote an environment of respect, diversity of views where employees feel comfortable. Employers and employees should not discriminate against employees based on political beliefs.

Halloween Parties and Costumes – Halloween has turned into a popular event with many companies hosting costume contests and parties. While employees want to have fun, guidelines need to be set for a positive environment. Costumes and party decorations should always be non-controversial and in good taste. Costume depicting celebrities or political figures, relating to religion, targeting a specific race or social group, or are sexually provocative should not be worn in the workplace. Sending out guidelines prior to the event and making it clear that participation in parties and costumes is voluntary will ensure the Halloween celebration is not offensive and unprofessional.

Updated I-9 – By now, the newest version of the Form I-9 which became mandatory on September 18th, must be used for new employees. Current employees are not required to complete the form again, but the revised Form I-9 should be provided to all new hires. For a copy of the form, go to [Human Resource Solutions Forms - Form I-9](#)

Department of Labor Overtime Rules – In the past months, the DOL has been gathering opinions and hosting listening sessions regarding the exempt salary threshold and is expected to release a new overtime plan in March 2019. The 2016 proposed revisions, which would have increased the minimum exempt salary threshold to \$47,476, was blocked by a court order and never took effect. The new threshold is expected to be in the low to mid \$30k's but may not take effect until 2020.

Time Clock Variance – Remember, any variance from written timekeeping policies can lead to lawsuits. Train managers to follow company policies and resist the pressure to allow off-the-clock work. All non-exempt employees must be paid for all time worked, including overtime for hours worked over 40 in a work week.

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2019 Payroll Taxes Will Hit Higher Incomes – Starting January 1st, the maximum earnings that will be subject to the Social Security payroll tax will increase by \$4,500 to \$132,900 from the current \$128,400. Employers should adjust their payroll systems to account for the higher taxable wage cap and notify affected employees.

Key Dates in November

- November 4th – Daylight Savings Time ends
- November 6th – Election Day
- November 11th Veterans Day

“Always do your best. What you plant now will harvest later.

Og Mandino

Year-End tends to be one of the busiest times for Human Resource and Payroll departments. If you need assistance on benefit enrollment, communications, year-end audits or extra help, we are available to help. For questions on any of the above items, or assistance, please contact info@humanresourcesolutionsllc.com

This newsletter is intended to provide general guidance about recent topics in Human Resources. It is not a legal opinion. For answers to your specific questions, please consult with counsel.