'Best Practices for Best Employers™' Webinar Series

Join us for our consistently popular and informative annual "Best Practices for Best Employers™" labor and employment event. With the safety and health of attendees our top priority, we have reimagined our traditional in-person seminars into a nine-week webinar series. Running from October 15 to December 17, we will host a weekly 60-minute webinar, where our attorneys and guest speakers will provide the most up-to-date guidance as it relates to employment laws, changing legislation and industry trends that employers need to be prepared for in the coming year.

This webinar series is ideal for in-house counsel, HR professionals and employers of all sizes who are eager to stay at the forefront of employment best practices and the changing policies that will continue to shape the rapidly evolving workplace.
We invite you to tailor your experience by choosing the sessions most suitable for you and your organization — you can attend one, multiple or all sessions. If you are unable to join us at the scheduled date and time, we encourage you to register in order to receive access to the recording following the live event.

**BREAKING NEWS: Keeping Up With COVID (Legal Updates Part 1)**

October 15 | 10 - 11 a.m. PDT

Sean Jackson, Mike Kitson and Miranda Strong, Lane Powell PC

2020 is a year like no other. Like the world, many of the most challenging issues facing human resources professionals have to do with the impact of COVID-19. The fact is that our labor and employment laws were not written with a pandemic in mind, and the laws, regulations and executive orders implemented in the last six months to address the pandemic were passed on the fly. These dynamics have created an uncertain climate with lots of potential land mines for employers. Accordingly, in part one of our two-part legal update, we will focus on COVID-related topics including remote workers, high risk employees, family and medical leave, return to work, unemployment benefits and pandemic litigation trends.

**Registration**

A New Guide for Private Employers Managing Employee Speech in the Workplace
October 20 | 10 - 11 a.m. PDT

Blake Barnes, Microsoft and Mike Reilly, Lane Powell PC

Frequent protests involving the 2020 political campaign, Black Lives Matter, and COVID-19 require that employers construct a plan on managing speech in the workplace. This session reviews: (a) is there “Freedom of Speech” in the private workplace?; (b) what types of “concerted activity” employee speech is protected by the National Labor Relations Act?; (c) Does an employee have the right to “drop the F-bomb” when speaking with the employer? (d) What types of policies (like non-solicitation policies) are effective in the workplace to manage employee political speech?; and (e) Are there limits to a private employer’s political speech in the workplace?

Registration

‘If You Leave Me Now’: What Employers Need to Know About Leave and Accommodation Obligations During the Pandemic

October 29 | 10 - 11 a.m. PDT

Katheryn Bradley and Shirley Lou-Magnuson, Lane Powell PC

With the patchwork of federal, state and local leave laws to administer on top of new paid family and medical leave programs, many employers were already reeling when 2020 began. When the pandemic hit and quarantine orders followed, employers faced new challenges with teleworking and managing employees without available childcare. Congress responded with emergency legislation mandating paid leave for COVID-19 related illness and childcare purposes. Governor Inslee also issued proclamations requiring accommodations for high risk employees. While employees explore a smorgasbord of leave and accommodation possibilities for managing their lives during the pandemic, this has left
many managers and HR professionals feeling overwhelmed. Using real life examples, this presentation will supply you with a checklist and other tools so you can navigate gracefully through leave and accommodation obligations to manage your workforce during these challenging times.

Registration

‘Phoning it In’: Effectively Managing the Telecommuting Employee

November 5 | 10 - 11 a.m. PST

Christine Thelen and Priya Vivian, Lane Powell PC

The pandemic has changed our daily lives in many ways, including making teleworking the norm instead of the exception. More employees working remotely also presents new challenges for managing performance and a heightened potential for legal risk. In this session, you will learn: effective methods for managing employee performance and promoting employee engagement remotely; steps you can take to mitigate risks related to wage and hour laws and worker compensation claims; critical issues to address when employees are working from multiple states; how protected leave and reasonable accommodation laws apply to remote workers; and the benefits and importance of having a telecommuting policy and agreement.

Registration

What Business Steps Employers Need to Do Now to Survive COVID-19

November 12 | 10 - 11 a.m. PST
Your business has been hit hard by the pandemic. What can you do to survive? This session will review strategies employers can adopt to reduce employee wage and benefit costs and accommodate working from home while avoiding additional taxes, jail time and other penalties. This session reviews: how to handle payroll taxes for remote employees; the tax implications of reimbursing employees for home office expenses; whether employers must offer health care benefits to furloughed employees or employees with reduced hours; extended deadlines for COBRA benefits; retirement plan partial plan termination rules; and a brief discussion about how to plan for the Seattle’s City Council new “Jump Start Seattle” tax on businesses, applicable to employees who make more than $150,000 per year.

Registration

Major Developments at the NLRB: COVID-19, Employer Policies, Investigations, Union Organizing and Much More

November 17 | 10 - 11 a.m. PST

The last year has seen major changes at the NLRB which will affect all employers — union and non-union alike. In addition to special rules relating to COVID-19, the NLRB has issued important decisions concerning internal investigations, employee access to email systems, political demonstrations, protected activity and employee discipline, joint employment, independent contractors, withdrawal of union recognition, union elections and employer policies. Many of these decisions have significantly expanded employer rights. In this program, you will learn how, with this increased flexibility, all employers may best pursue legally compliant strategies and how to maintain a union-free workforce.
BREAKING NEWS: Legal Updates Through an Election Year Lens (Legal Update Part 2)

December 3 | 10 - 11 a.m. PST

Sean Jackson, Rish Puri and Miranda Strong, Lane Powell PC

Employers are not just facing uncertainty due to COVID. The election — and the differing policies of the candidates — create additional uncertainty around many areas of the law. Accordingly, in part two of our two-part legal update, we will provide an update on more general employment topics with an eye to what additional changes the election might bring.

Even More Immigration Rules: Substantial Changes in 2020

December 8 | 10 - 11 a.m. PST

Dustin O’Quinn, Lane Powell PC

The global pandemic and changes to working environments have drastically changed how employers can hire and retain employees born outside the U.S. We will review the most significant changes to sponsorship, compliance, reductions in force and international travel.
The Positive Path Forward: Integrating a Strategic Diversity & Inclusion Plan to Drive Real Change

December 17 | 10 - 11 a.m. PST

Sharon Orlopp and John Dyer, HR and Diversity & Inclusion Experts

With the COVID-19 pandemic providing businesses unexpected opportunities for impactful change, now is the time to implement a strategic diversity and inclusion plan that fosters growth, both in talent and in business. Experts in their field, guest speakers Sharon Orlopp and John Dyer will share their success stories in building diversity and inclusion programs for some of the largest companies in the world and how those programs directly impacted company culture and employee retention. Rounding out our final session of the series, this dynamic presentation will detail the essential building blocks to developing company wide DEI programs, the importance of employee resource groups, and how remote work has significantly expanded access to diverse talent.

Registration

Speakers

Blake Barnes | Microsoft |
Senior Attorney

Blake is a Senior Attorney at Microsoft, managing and defending employment litigation brought against Microsoft. Her experience covers all
areas of workplace litigation, including discrimination/harassment/relation, wage/hour, FMLA, ADA, and all types of class actions brought by employees against employers. Blake has 25 years of experience providing advice to HR and management, as well as managing people and programs.

Katheryn Bradley | Lane Powell | Labor, Employment & Benefits Team Co-Chair

Katheryn has extensive experience successfully representing private and public employers in employment litigation, litigating claims for wrongful discharge, discrimination, and violations of leave and wage and hour laws. She has also defended employers in individual and class action lawsuits in trial and appellate courts throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Katheryn advises managers and HR professionals on best practices to manage leave and navigate through accommodations for disabled employees. She also advises employers on best practices to avoid employment claims.

Katheryn prepares executive
employment agreements, covenants not to compete, and intellectual property agreements. She also regularly provides EEO training to managers.

Craig practices employee benefits law, counseling clients on tax-qualified retirement plans such as 401(k) plans, pensions and ESOPs. He also advises on executive compensation, including equity and nonqualified plans. Craig also advises on health and welfare plan issues, including COBRA, the ACA and HIPAA.

With more than 28 years of experience, Craig’s background in private practice, consulting and in-house counsel have shaped his practical approach to helping clients find solutions to complex employee benefits issues.
Acquisition Expert

John created his consulting practice, NETRA Consulting, for fellow Talent Acquisition, Procurement and Human Resource professionals who manage Non-Employee or Contingent Talent programs. John augments diverse talent pools using third party, diversity owned, suppliers to fill skill gaps quickly. He has lived his truth as a gay man while working at cultural change agents like Microsoft, Amazon and AT&T for the past 23 years. John knows what it is like to feel different which is what drives his creating passion for inclusion and becoming consciously unbiased in the workplace.

Sean Jackson | Lane Powell | Shareholder

Sean is a seasoned litigator who represents companies and entities in a variety of civil litigation, with an emphasis on employment and transportation matters.

Sean’s employment practice includes the defense of public and private employers in claims of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wrongful discharge, and wage and hour
violations. He handles matters filed with state and federal agencies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington Human Rights Commission and the Washington Employment Security Department.

Mike Kitson | Lane Powell | Shareholder

Mike focuses his practice on defending and advising public entities and private companies in employment law matters. His approach to both advising and litigation is pragmatic and client-driven. Mike is always looking for ways to help clients avoid litigation, but is a dynamic and efficient advocate when litigation arises. Mike has extensive experience defending and resolving claims in state and federal courts for wrongful discharge, discrimination, accommodation, harassment, wage and hour law violations, and class actions. He also regularly conducts training on employment and labor law issues, civil rights, and public policy matters.
Eric Kodesch | Lane Powell | Shareholder

Eric counsels clients on a wide array of federal income tax, and state and local tax issues in both transactional and litigation matters, including general business planning, structuring investments to obtain opportunity zone benefits, financial transactions, trust taxation, executive compensation and choice of entity issues. Eric also assists clients with payroll protection program loan issues and other CARES Act issues.

For state and local matters, Eric assists clients with obtaining tax incentives. He also regularly represents clients in the Oregon Tax Court in controversies. For international transactions, Eric provides guidance to help clients structure cross-border transactions and comply with domestic and global tax regulations.

Shirley Lou-Magnuson | Lane Powell | Associate

Shirley is an experienced litigator who dedicates her practice to defending and advising public and private entities from civil and regulatory
liability. She regularly represents municipalities, other public entities, corporations, and represented financial institutions and school districts primarily in labor and employment as well as general corporate and transactional matters. Shirley has experience litigating before federal and state courts, administrative courts, the EEOC and the Washington State Human Rights Commission.

Dustin O'Quinn | Lane Powell | Immigration Team Chair

Dustin counsels clients of all sizes, from startups to Fortune 100 companies, in all areas of immigration law. He has extensive experience in the technology, energy, design and financial services industries. Dustin represents employers in H-1B, H-2B, H-2A and L-1 visa matters, as well as uncommon classifications, including investor and extraordinary-ability visas, and maritime immigration matters.

Dustin has been recognized by Chambers USA: America’s Leading Lawyers for Business for his immigration work, and named a
“Rising Star” by Super Lawyers® magazine.

Sharon Orlopp | HR and Diversity & Inclusion Executive

Sharon is an expert on diversity, inclusion and equity. She currently leads HR for two companies: a tech startup, Core Scientific, which is focused on AI and blockchain, and for 19 Orangetheory Fitness studios. Previously, she spent 12 years at Walmart where she was the Global Chief Diversity Officer and SVP of HR. Sharon created unique experiential immersion trips to teach others about different cultures. As an author, editor, and speaker, she is passionate about building a world where every person is valued and included. Sharon believes in the transformative power of personal stories to touch the heart, which in turn change behaviors.

Paul Ostroff | Lane Powell | Shareholder
Paul has been advising and counseling clients on all aspects of labor and employment law for more than 40 years. He regularly represents employers before federal and state courts and administrative agencies. Paul’s practice includes counseling employers on matters related to collective bargaining, labor arbitration, union organizing campaigns, employment discrimination, discipline and discharge, wage and hour, employee benefits, workers’ compensation, drafting of policies and handbooks and much more. Paul has been honored as one of The Best Lawyers in America® in the field of labor and employment law, and has been named an “Oregon Super Lawyer” by Super Lawyers® magazine.

Rishi counsels clients on a broad scope of issues ranging from top-down corporate policy to advice regarding individual employment decisions. His experience includes formulating meal and rest break policy and practices, determination of exempt status of employees and updating general HR policies. Rishi has experience in the industries of early childcare,
technology and wine and provides industry-specific advice to proactively manage risk. Rishi has significant experience in class actions and defending clients in single plaintiff matters. In addition, he defends clients involved in unfair labor practice charges filed by the National Labor Relations Board, regularly practices before the EEOC and assists with DOL audits and investigations.

**D. Michael Reilly | Lane Powell | Labor, Employment & Benefits Team Co-Chair**

Mike is a nationally recognized labor, employment and employee benefits attorney, named one of the “Top 100 Most Powerful Employment Attorneys in the Nation” by Human Resource Executive® and is the 2021 Best Lawyers®, Seattle "Lawyer of the Year", for employment-related litigation. He has represented clients in more than 75 jury trials, arbitrations, bench trials and claims before the EEOC and Washington State Human Rights Commission. Employers retain Mike for his strategic advice and decades of experience in employment issues and litigation, business decisions and litigation avoidance. Mike provides advice in claims involving
discrimination, retaliation, wrongful discharge, disability accommodation and much more.

Hank Stebbins | Lane Powell | Associate

Hank represents businesses and educational institutions in a range of labor and employment matters, including guiding employers through the myriad of regulations affecting their day-to-day operations.

Miranda Strong | Lane Powell | Counsel to the Firm

Miranda is a third-generation Alaskan focusing on compliance, litigation, government affairs and employment. Her success as an advisor stems from helping clients anticipate and navigate change. She has experience conducting investigations, risk-assessments and trainings — including on cybersecurity, harassment prevention and response and ethics and compliance. Miranda has worked in-house for an Alaska Native
Corporation as well as for the State of Alaska Department of Law. She has handled administrative employment hearings; designed and directed corporate compliance, records and information management, and export compliance programs; advised on Arctic, Alaska Native and energy public policy; and litigated trial and appellate cases.

Christine Thelen | Lane Powell | Counsel to the Firm

As a former Human Resources Consultant, Christine brings to her practice a unique understanding of the challenges employers and HR professionals face, from workplace disputes and employee relation issues to compliant policies and practices.

Christine provides advice and training to employers and human resource professionals on an array of HR policy, compliance, employee relations and workplace issues, including employee handbooks, challenging employee separation and disciplinary actions, employee complaints, leaves of absence and reasonable accommodations, employee agreements, respectful workplace training, and manager training on
effective management practices that mitigate risk.

Priya is an employment advisor and litigator. She advises and represents employers on the full employment cycle and provides each client with tailored solutions and strategies to address their unique business needs.

Priya advises employers on employment agreements, leave and accommodation issues, handbooks, discipline, and separations. She represents employers in employment disputes, either at the administrative level before the EEOC or a local agency, or in litigation in federal or state court. Priya also provides training to companies on various local, state and federal employment laws, as well as how to build respectful and inclusive workplaces.