

Workplace Violence Prevention Continues to Draw Attention

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Recent news demonstrates that workplace violence prevention remains an important issue that employers should not overlook. For example, a workers' advocacy group recently announced that its members had targeted an employer in the quick service restaurant industry by filing complaints to the Occupational Safety & Health Administration alleging a failure to address or prevent workplace violence.

Issues raised in these complaints included allegations of abusive conduct by customers, gun violence, and late-night violence. Workers' advocates are seeking greater protections for employees, as well as paid leave and counseling after incidents. In addition, in a recent decision, the Illinois Supreme Court tacitly endorsed an argument that employers should be screening prospective employees by using the internet and social media, in order to uncover job applicants who might present a risk of workplace violence that would not otherwise appear in a standard criminal background check report.

The court's decision in this regard cuts against advice that employment lawyers have been giving to HR representatives for many years on this practice. Based on these developments and events in the news, employers should be rethinking their strategies and approaches to the risks of violence affecting employees.

Attorneys

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We will be discussing these issues among other topics during our upcoming June 20 breakfast event. Please register here for more information.