

Deadline Fast Approaching: Illinois Law Requires that All Employees Receive Sexual Harassment Training by December 31, 2020

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As a part of last year's changes to the Illinois Human Rights Act (read more here), all Illinois employers are required to provide sexual harassment training for all employees and management personnel on an annual basis, with the first compliance period ending December 31, 2020. Notably, the Illinois legislature has not delayed this deadline due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Employers that have not yet conducted sexual harassment training for all of their employees must do so by December 31, 2020. Employers may satisfy this requirement by using the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) model sexual harassment training, available from the agency's website, by developing their own sexual harassment training program, or by bringing in a trainer to conduct sexual harassment training. At a minimum, the sexual harassment training must include:

- an explanation of sexual harassment consistent with the Illinois Human Rights Act;
- examples of conduct that constitutes unlawful sexual harassment;
- a summary of relevant federal and State statutory provisions concerning sexual harassment, including remedies available to victims of sexual harassment; and

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- a summary of responsibilities of employers in the prevention, investigation, and corrective measures of sexual harassment.

Additional sexual harassment training requirements apply to restaurants and bars. While the IDHR model training program will satisfy the minimum requirements for Illinois employers, we strongly recommend that employers conduct their own training or bring in a trainer to conduct training based on their individualized business. These programs can be far more effective, as they offer:

- A knowledgeable trainer who is experienced in dealing with issues of workplace harassment and discrimination. Live training may be conducted in-person or remotely via video conferencing platforms.
- Interactive and participatory elements to allow employees to better understand the material and obtain answers to their questions.
- Tailored training, specific to your workplace and the issues that may arise in the course of your operations. Customized programs provide examples and information specific to your workplace, which will maximize employee engagement and comprehension.

As the December 31, 2020 deadline fast approaches, Laner Muchin offers our expertise in creating and presenting Illinois-compliant sexual harassment training that is customized to meet our clients' needs and maximize employee engagement and comprehension. Our attorneys regularly conduct anti-harassment and anti-discrimination training for clients in all types of workplaces, both in-person and remotely. We also regularly assist employers in developing in-house training programs and by providing "train the trainer" sessions. We encourage you to contact your Laner Muchin servicing attorney for assistance with meeting the December 31, 2020 training deadline.