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Host of New Illinois Laws Impacts Hotels

Human Resources & Employment

Employment laws are often grouped based on numbers – number of employees, to be exact. Sometimes, however, you can group laws by industry. This year, a number of new laws will affect Illinois hotels.

Lodging Services Human Trafficking Recognition Training Act

Illinois lodging establishments will need to provide training to certain employees on how to recognize the signs of human trafficking beginning June 1, 2020. The new law defines lodging establishments as those classified as hotels or motels in the 2017 NAICS and those listed as casino hotels in the same federal system. Any employee who has “recurring interactions with the public, including, but not limited to, an employee who works in a reception area, performs housekeeping duties, helps customers in moving their possessions, or transports by vehicle customers of the lodging establishment” is covered. The training must take place within six months of hire, and every two years thereafter.

Hotel and Casino Employee Safety Act

Hotels must equip certain employees with notification devices starting July 1, 2020. The new law states that hotels “shall equip an employee who is assigned to work in a guest room, restroom, or casino floor, under circumstances where no other employee is present in the room or area, with a safety device or notification device. The employee may use the safety device or notification device to summon help if the employee reasonably believes that an ongoing crime, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or other emergency is occurring in the employee’s presence. The safety device or notification device shall be provided by the hotel or casino at no cost to the employee.” The devices must be portable, with a design that allows an employee to “quickly and easily activate the device to alert the hotel or casino security officer, manager, or other appropriate hotel or casino staff member designated by the hotel or casino” to summon help to the employee’s location. Defining hotels as “any building or buildings maintained, advertised, and held out to the public to be a place where lodging is offered for consideration to travelers and guests,” including “an inn, motel, tourist home or court, and lodging house,” the law covers virtually any commercial lodging establishments with employees serving guests. The law also requires that covered employers “develop, maintain, and comply with a written anti-sexual harassment policy to protect employees against sexual assault and sexual harassment by guests.” A guest is “any invitee to a hotel or casino, including a registered guest, person occupying a guest room with a registered guest or other occupant of a guest room, person patronizing food or beverage facilities provided by the hotel or casino, or any other person whose presence at the hotel or casino is permitted by the hotel or casino. Guests do not include employees.

Fair Workweek Ordinance (Chicago only)

[As we discussed in a recent blog post](#), Chicago employers in certain industries will be required to provide advance notice to employees about their schedules, including hours at work and hours on call, beginning July 1, 2020. Hotels are one of seven industries covered by the ordinance, and will be required to provide ten days’ notice of schedules to employees who performs the majority of work within city limits and earn less than or equal to \$50,000 per year in salary, or \$26 per hour. Hotels with at least 100 employees globally, 50 of whom are covered by the ordinance, must comply. While contractors are not covered, temporary employees – common to the industry – must be given notice. The notice requirement will increase to 14 days in July 2022.