



The Source

October 2007



Southern Wisconsin - Northern Illinois
SHRM Chapter 71

Legal Update: Troy Thompson

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Upcoming Events:

Nov. 13 Meeting

Overview of EEOC and Sponsor a Student Night

Speaker: Maria Flores, Program Manager with EEOC

Location: Pontiac Center, Janesville

5:00pm Registration
5:30pm Dinner

SENATE BILL SEEKS COMPENSATORY AND PUNITIVE DAMAGES AGAINST EMPLOYERS OF ALL SIZE

2007 Senate Bill 165 seeks to amend the Wisconsin Fair Employment Act to make available for prevailing complaints unlimited compensatory and punitive damages. The Wisconsin Society for Human Resource Management and Blackhawk Human Resources Association Board of Directors strongly opposed this bill and encourage you to contact your state legislators to express to them your concerns with the same. Under the current Wisconsin Fair Employment Act, the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development can award a prevailing complainant "make whole" remedies including:

- reinstatement,
- back pay and back benefits,
- attorneys' fees and litigation costs, and injunctive relief directing the employer to comply with the law.

Current law, however, does not authorize the Department to order the payment of compensatory or punitive damages, or any other penalties in cases of employment discrimination. Compensatory damages include damages for such things as emotional distress and pain and suffering. Punitive damages have a dual purpose. The first is to punish the particular defendant for its past bad acts. The second is to serve as a deterrent to other potential bad actors who might be less inclined to violate the law in light of the possible exposure to such damages.

Senate Bill 165 seeks to permit a person who has been discriminated against (or the Department) to bring a lawsuit in circuit court to recover damages caused by an act of discrimination. If the circuit court finds that a defendant has committed an act of discrimination, the circuit court would then be required to order the defendant to pay to the person discriminated against compensatory and punitive damages in an amount that the circuit court finds appropriate and to pay the circuit court a surcharge equal to 10% of the amount of compensatory and punitive damages ordered. Surcharges collected under the bill would be transmitted to the Secretary of Administration, deposited into the General Fund, and credited to an appropriation account under the Department which would then be obligated to use those surcharges for the administration of the Wisconsin Fair Employment Act.

The bill would apply to all Wisconsin employers large and small and would unnecessarily complicate both the prosecution and the defense of these claims. The bill would also require good hearted employers to incur significant additional defense costs in successfully defending non-meritorious claims by opportunistic former employees. Some employers have no choice but to pay nuisance value on claims even when they have a viable defense simply because they cannot afford the costs associated with successfully defending a claim. The current bill would allow more employees to leverage from their former employers benefits to which they are not entitled and for that reason, among others, should be opposed. You can find your local legislators' contact information at www.shrm.org/writecongress.asp.

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Upcoming Meeting Information

2007/2008 BHRA Board Members:

President & Community Relations Co-Director,
Lori Rhead, SPHR:
(608) 363-2630
rhead@beloit.edu

President-Elect & Programming Co-Director
Kelly Hendee, PHR:
(608) 364-6617
hendeek@ci.beloit.wi.us

Vice-President & Professional Development Director/
Certification,
Melissa Benson, PHR
(608) 373-2389
Melissa.benson@bourns.com

Past President, & Website Co-Director,
Jennifer Griffith, SPHR :
(608) 754-2710 Ext. 1305
jgriffith@freedomplastics.com

Secretary & Newsletter,
Nicole Larson, PHR:
(608) 754-2710 Ext. 1279
nlarson@freedomplastics.com

Treasurer
Elaine Schultz, PHR:
(608) 755-4297
elaine.schultz@micorp.com

Membership
Bernice York, SPHR:
(608)368-5623
byork@cotta.com

<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Speakers</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Oct 9, 2007	11:30 am	La Casa Grande 618 4th St. Beloit, WI 53511	Cecil Youngblood, Director of Multi-cultural Affairs and Asst Dean at Beloit College	Moving from Diversity to Cultural Competency
Nov 13, 2007	5:00pm	Pontiac Center, Janesville	Maria Flores, Program Manager for EEOC	Overview of EEOC

Mark Your Calendars!

We encourage you to attend October's lunch meeting!

WHEN: Tuesday, October 9th, 11:30am Sign-in, Taco Bar 12:00pm; Presentation to follow.

WHERE: La Casa Grande, 618 4th St. Beloit, WI 53511

TOPIC: Moving from Diversity to Cultural Competency

This meeting has a great "twist" to it. It covers a continually emerging topic of Diversity...The "D" word as it is being referred to in the business community, represents many things to many groups. The meaning of the word itself is "diverse," and can be a hot topic of conversation. How do you answer these questions:

- What is diversity? What is its definition in general? For your organization? For you?
- Why is it important? Is it?
- What is there after diversity? Where do we go with it?
- How do we interact intelligently and successfully with the "diversity" of the world in which we currently live?

These questions will be addressed in an interactive format as we talk about moving from promoting diversity to achieving cultural competency.

PRESENTER'S BIO:

Cecil Youngblood has his Bachelor of Arts and Science from Augustana College and is currently completing a Master's in education and administration. Cecil has taught, coached and been involved in administration in education for over 25 years. His work in inter-culturalism includes workshops for the coaches in the Midwest Conference for the NCAA, responsibility for developing programming and training for college students and staff, and membership in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest Minority Concerns Committee.

If your organization would like to sponsor one of our meetings, please contact Lori Rhead, SPHR, rhead@beloit.edu

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Board Members cont.

Member Relations Director,
Rhonda Bachman:
(608) 314-8408
rhondal@assuredstaffing.net

Legislative Co-Director
Troy Thompson:
(608) 283-6746
tthompson@axley.com

Diversity Director
John Emmart, D. Minn, CEAD,
SAP:
(608) 756-6803
jemmart@mhsjvl.org

Workforce Readiness & Wage
Survey Co-Director
Stacey Riechers:
(608) 752-7558
Stacey_riechers@kellyservices.com

Workforce Readiness Co-Director
Terry Moe:
(608) 741-3524
Terence.Moe@dwd.state.wi.us

Dinner & Reservations Director
Pati Shea:
(608) 752-4830
patishea@grande.com

Seminar & Special Events
Director
Christine Moss, PHR:
(608) 756-6518
cmoss@mhsjvl.org

ATP "Advancing the Profession"

Definitions and Examples

ATP is about helping HR professionals understand their leadership capabilities and potential contributions to their organizations, providing them the tools to enable them to fully engage in the *business* process, and helping them advance in their careers. ATP is also about helping the business community (and the public broadly) understand the contributions HR can make to organizational success.

Examples of ATP activities or materials:

- Ensuring recognition of the value of HR professionals as business leaders.
 - Working with the media to comment on issues, suggest story ideas and contribute columns specifically on business issues and the role of HR leadership.
 - Forming partnerships with local organizations to promote the profession.
 - Using respected HR executives to speak at local CEO events, as well as your events.
- Ensuring that HR has influence in local, state, and national legislation and governmental affairs.
 - Inviting a legislator or local elected official to a chapter meeting.
 - Conducting a letter-writing campaign on a key issue, etc.
- Providing programs that build the leadership and business competencies of HR professionals and help them advance in their careers.
 - Inviting a local HR executive who reports to the CEO at a leading company to talk about the issues they face, their strategic role, etc.
 - Including sessions on strategy, metrics and business literacy at conferences, etc.
 - Hold a luncheon roundtable discussion on how strategy and leadership apply to HR professionals at all levels and within all organizations.
 - Encourage participation in the SHRM Academy, which provides instruction and certificates in business areas such as finance, marketing, and strategy.
 - Hold a drive to spur interest in the new Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR) certification.
- Ensuring that the credibility of the HR profession is upheld by following and supporting ethical standards and conduct.
 - Distributing SHRM's Code of Conduct for HR professionals

Your Foundation @ Work ~ Generating Research Based Knowledge

Over the past ten years, the SHRM Foundation has funded more than \$1 million in research grants for 79 research projects. The SHRM Foundation promotes the use of "research-based knowledge". What does that mean for you? It means enhanced credibility. Imagine proposing a new program to senior management and being able to cite solid research to demonstrate the benefits of your proposed change. The Foundation is funding practical research every year to help you do just that. Current research projects focus on critical areas such as *Technology & HR*, *HR Measurement*, *Global HR*, and *The Changing Role of the HR Professional*. Research results will help provide research-based answers to questions such as: How should a mentoring program be structured for maximum effectiveness? How do HR leaders make a strategic impact on their organizations? To review the results of recently completed SHRM Foundation research, visit <http://www.shrm.org/foundation/findings.asp>

The SHRM Foundation: *40 Years of Advancing the HR Profession*





Labor and Employment Law Workshop

Small Business Development Center

- Southwest Wisconsin

Who should attend? Owners, operations managers and human resources professionals of small to medium size businesses which employ one or more individuals.

What is the cost?

\$35 per person - Cost includes: lunch, refreshments and presentation materials

Why should I attend? Field investigators and auditors will be sharing pertinent and important information related to legal compliance in these key employment areas.

You will learn:

- Federal and state employment regulations
- Federal and state wage requirements
- What resources (even free) are available
- Where, how and how much to pay in employment taxes
- What records should be kept
- What to do in case of an audit or inspection
- How to avoid penalties and lawsuits
- How to handle employee matters without a human resources department
- What is equal rights among employees
- What are the obligations related to unemployment insurance
- What is a safe workplace for employees ...

For questions call the SBDC 608-342-1038 or Blackhawk Technical College 608-329-8203.

To register call Blackhawk Technical College 608-328-1660.



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration

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Why Not Get Certified?

Interested in testing for your PHR/SPHR/GPHR certification or joining our study group? If so, please contact Melissa Benson, Certification Chairperson at melissa.benson@bourns.com. BHRA has SHRM Learning Systems that will be utilized in the study group and are also available for individual check out. Please note your decision to test will be kept confidential if you would like it to!



Next Testing Window is December 1, 2007-January 31, 2008. The registration deadline for this testing window is *October 12, 2007*. Go to www.hrci.org for more information, or to register online.

Remember to recertify!

Recertification demonstrates your continued dedication to stay up to date with the rapidly changing HR profession. To retain the PHR, SPHR or GPHR designations, HRCI requires all certificants to recertify every three years. Go to HRCI.org for details on recertification.



Sponsor a Student Night



This year's annual Sponsor a Student Night will be held on Tuesday, November 13 (dinner meeting). Sponsorship includes making contact with your paired student prior to the event, paying the registration fee for the student that night, helping the student to acclimate to our chapter and remaining a professional contact for the student throughout the year.

Please contact Melissa Benson at melissa.benson@bourns.com if you are interested in sponsoring a UW-Whitewater student for this meeting.

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SHRM Foundation Scholarship Program

Eligibility

- All national SHRM members pursuing a college degree in human resources or working towards SPHR, GPHR or PHR certification are eligible to apply. (Note: SHRM professional, general or associate members may apply; however student members and local-only members of chapters are not eligible for this scholarship program.) In addition, chapters and state councils are eligible to compete for the scholarship money to fund programs that promote SPHR, GPHR or PHR certification locally.
- SHRM members outside the U.S. are eligible to apply. In place of a SHRM region, they should write 'international' on their applications. International applications will be distributed among the five regions for judging.

Selection Criteria

Regional Scholarship recipients will be selected based on the following criteria:

Certification Scholarships

Individuals

- 40% Work experience/progression & HR career plans
- 40% Volunteer activity
- 20% Financial need

Academic Scholarships

- Scholarship recipients will be selected based primarily on merit.
- 50% Work experience/progression (HR involvement & future career plans)
- 20% Volunteer activity
- 20% Financial need
- 10% Letters of reference



For more information, go to: http://www.shrm.org/foundation/2002_scholguidelines.asp



SHRM Foundation Academic Scholarship Recipient

Congratulations to BHRA President Lori Rhead, SPHR for receiving a SHRM Foundation academic scholarship!

A total of 100 Regional Scholarships were awarded in 2007. Awards included 40 academic scholarships of \$1375 each and 60 certification scholarships of \$750 each. Twenty awards were given in each of the five domestic SHRM regions. Members from the island nations were invited to apply as part of the domestic regions. SHRM received 300 applications this year for the 100 scholarship opportunities. Applications are due each year in July.



→ DON'T
FORGET!

Don't Forget to Renew Your 2007/2008 BHRA Membership!

Continue your opportunity to network with over 140 other human resource professionals. A dynamic lineup of programs is planned for the upcoming monthly meetings.

Don't miss out!

Enroll online at www.bhraonline.org or contact Bernice York, Membership Chairperson at byork@cotta.com for additional information.

Unemployed SHRM Members Can Extend Membership for Free!

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) provides active members who are unemployed at the time of their membership renewal a one-time opportunity to extend their membership for up to one year at no cost.

SHRM believes that this continued affiliation to its loyal members will help transitioning members stay current on the issues affecting the HR profession and will provide them with needed resources to assist them in their job search.

Transitioning members will receive all SHRM free and discounted member benefits for up to one year, except for voting privileges and the ability to hold office on a SHRM panel or board.

Visit www.shrm.org/members/transitioning for more information.

Other Contact information:

Wisconsin SHRM
www.wishrm.org

National SHRM
www.shrm.org

HR Certification Institute
www.hrci.org

HR Voice
<http://www.shrm.org/government/hrvoice>



Volunteer Opportunity

Workforce Readiness Committee

Volunteer to be a part of helping our workforce become armed with the "Skills to Succeed"

BHRA has recently established a "Workforce Readiness Committee". The purpose of this committee is to "brainstorm" ideas relating to Workforce Readiness and to act on these ideas. In addition, help bridge the connection between businesses and education and to develop innovative ways to instill the "Skills for Success" concept and ideas within the Workforce of today. What we expect this committee to achieve is to have all employees and potential employees of the area to have the "soft" skills needed to be a great employee.

If anyone is interested in being on a Workforce Readiness Committee through BHRA, please contact Terry Moe @ terence.moe@dwd.state.wi.us or (608) 741-3524.

Next Month's Issue of The Source:

Information on November's BHRA Meeting

If you know a human resource professional that would be interested in joining our association, please spread the word! We can all benefit from each other's experience!

If you have anything you would like to submit or suggestions for the BHRA Newsletter, please let us know!

Contact Information:

Nicole Larson at Freedom Plastics, Inc. at (608)754-2710 Ext. 1279 or email nlarson@freedomplastics.com.