Management Trainings: An Invaluable Investment for Businesses Seeking to Avoid Being Sued

By Michelle De Oliveira on June 18, 2026

PROFESSIONALS

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PRACTICES

Employment Law

Employment law is constantly evolving as courts issue groundbreaking decisions and new statutes are enacted at both the state and federal level. As a result, regularly conducting employment-related risk management training has become increasingly important for employers. Areas that warrant particular attention include, among others, management best practices, wage-and-hour compliance, workplace harassment prevention, and personnel records management.

Management Best Practices

Managers interact with employees daily and generally serve as the primary point of contact in the employer-employee relationship. As a result, employers that invest in training their management teams on employment-related best practices are better positioned to ensure that workplace issues are handled appropriately, consistently, and in compliance with applicable laws and company policies. Equipping managers with the knowledge and tools necessary to appropriately address and respond to personnel matters strengthens compliance efforts, improves workplace decision-making, and reduces exposure to costly litigation. Ultimately, proactive training and consistent adherence to established policies and best practices are critical to minimizing legal risk, fostering a positive workplace culture, and supporting organizational success—while proactively taking steps to avoid being sued.

The Massachusetts Wage Act: Strict Liability and Costly Consequences for Violations

The Massachusetts Wage Act is a *"no mercy,"* strict liability statute. In practical terms, this means that an employer that violates the statute may face automatic liability for treble damages, attorney's fees, and costs—regardless of intent or good faith. No defenses. Period.

One of the Wage Act's most important requirements concerns the timing of wage payments to employees. In the recent *Reuter v. City of Methuen* decision, the court cemented an employer's obligation to pay an employee in full for all wages earned through an involuntary termination date *on* the termination date. Not a day later. Employers that fail to meet this requirement may be liable for treble damages—meaning three times the amount of unpaid or late-paid wages—plus attorney's fees and costs.

Different rules apply when an employee voluntarily resigns. In those circumstances, the employer is not required to pay the employee on the resignation date. However, all wages earned through the resignation date must be paid no later than the next regular pay period.

The financial consequences of Wage Act violations can be substantial. Moreover, liability may extend beyond the company itself. The statute provides that "the president and treasurer of a corporation and any officers or agents having the management of such corporation" may be held personally liable for violations. As a result, owners and officers, among others, may face individual liability. To that end, employers should consider training management teams to ensure that they appreciate the importance of properly handling employee terminations to ensure Wage Act compliance.

Preventing & Addressing Workplace Harassment

A portion of my practice involves conducting workplace trainings on how to prevent and address discrimination and harassment. At almost every training session, we find that at least one manager (or two) does not fully understand the company's policies relating to discrimination and harassment—and more concerningly, they do not understand the critical role they play in prevention.

Failing to train management personnel on these issues can be a costly mistake. Discrimination and harassment training is essential for businesses seeking to proactively reduce legal exposure by helping managers understand company policies, and ensure managers understand how to, among other things:

- Enforce company policies consistently;
- Respond appropriately when concerns arise in the workplace; and
- Recognize their essential role in preventing discrimination and harassment before issues escalate.

The need for proactive training is underscored by the volume of discrimination-related claims filed each year. In 2025, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination received 3,243 complaints alleging employment discrimination or harassment.**[1]** At the federal level, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received 88,201 complaints in 2025.**[2]** While no training program can guarantee that a lawsuit will never be filed, regular training represents a cost-effective and proactive strategy for reducing legal exposure and strengthening workplace compliance.

Adhering to the Personnel Records Statute and Understanding an Employee's Right to Rebut Information Placed in Personnel Records

The decision in *Meehan v. Medical Information Technology, Inc.* highlights an employee's statutory right to file a rebuttal in response to information placed in the employee's personnel records. Managers make personnel decisions and recommendations, and as a result, conducting management training on the implications stemming from *Meehan* can go a long way toward helping employers educate their management teams and guard against potential claims.

A Proactive Investment

Employers that invest in management training will equip their teams to better identify risks, respond appropriately to workplace issues, and comply with evolving legal requirements. While training cannot eliminate every potential claim, it remains one of the most effective tools available to help employers avoid costly litigation and the significant disruptions that often accompany it.

Employers with questions regarding employment-law compliance or workplace training programs are encouraged to contact an RIW employment attorney for additional information.

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