

For Your Info

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IRS Lowers Mileage Rate to 44.5 cents for 2006

The IRS recently announced that they plan to lower the mileage reimbursement rate by 4 cents beginning in 2006. Many of our clients may choose to revise their mileage rate also beginning in 2006. For more information, click on <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=151226,00.html>.

A Definition of Applicant

According to Carol Sander, an experienced Affirmative Action Plan consultant, we finally have a definition of "applicant". Published on Friday, October 7, 2005 in the Federal Register, the regulation cites the following four criteria to be considered an "Internet applicant":

1. The individual submits an expression of interest in employment through the Internet or related electronic data technologies;
2. The employer considers the individual for employment in a particular open position;

The OFCCP is Sending Letters To Thousands Of Companies

In early October of 2005, The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) announced that the agency is mailing several thousand letters within the next month to companies across the country. There are two types of notification letters that were sent to employers:

1. Corporate Scheduling Announcement Letters - These letters were sent to several hundred corporate headquarters that have multiple locations. These letters will give companies a "heads up" that these firms will be targeted for full-blown audits during the next few months.

2. Traditional Compliance Review Letters - These letters were sent to approximately 1500 companies with single office establishments. This letter initiates a compliance review immediately. Employers will have 30 days from the date they receive the letter to submit their Affirmative Action Plans to the OFCCP for audit.

Additionally the OFCCP has also announced that they plan to send another "wave" of these letters between in late 2005 and early 2006.

What Can Companies Do Now?

It is important that the President and/or CEO's office is advised to notify HR if their office receives this letter. The letter will not include the specific name of the President or CEO but will simply be addressed to the President or CEO.

Determine whether your firm is required to have a written Affirmative Action Plan.

If your company meets the requirements, you should ensure that your company has a current audit-ready Affirmative Action Plan.

Please contact us if you have specific questions about your company's compliance issues.

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3. The individual's expression of interest indicates that the individual possesses the advertised, basic qualifications for the position; and
4. The individual does not indicate that he or she is no longer interested in employment in the position for which the employer has considered the individual.

If you recall, the proposed regulation discussed two separate definitions — “anyone who expresses an interest” for hard copies, and a different definition for internet applicants. The OFCCP has eliminated the dual standard for Internet versus traditional applicants as long as you consider both types of resumes or applications for a particular position. If you consider only paper resumes for a position, the Internet definition no longer applies. The regulation includes three examples to clarify the rule. For specifics, visit <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/pdf/05-20176.pdf>. The examples are on page 58959, first column.

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Training Is In Demand Again

As the economy has improved, demand for our training programs have increased also. Some of most popular offerings this year have been:

The Legal Side of HR

Compliance in the world of HR is more complex than ever. In this workshop, we explore the “alphabet soup” of HR, including FMLA, HIPAA, ADA, I-9s, AA, EEO, IRCA, FLSA and OSHA is de-mystified. Managers are given a broad overview of compliance requirements. The session is even further tailored to discuss specific laws relevant to your company size, industry and geographic location(s). Definitions of key employment and labor laws are reviewed in layperson's terms. This workshop will show critical decision-makers how to avoid the threat of costly and time-consuming litigation. Real-life case studies are presented and analyzed. A must for supervisors and managers. This workshop can be co-presented with an experienced Boston-area attorney.

Meeting Management

How to effectively lead a meeting. Setting the ground rules and norms for your meetings. We will discuss agendas and using practical tools to run more efficient meetings. Learn how to make better use of your time using a focused approach.

Happy Holidays!
Thank you for your business!