

What Can Employers Expect from this Connecticut General Assembly Session?

Working Together

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On January 7, 2015, the 2015 session of the Connecticut General Assembly began. The session is scheduled to adjourn on June 3, 2015. A plethora of proposed bills affecting Connecticut employers and employees will be unleashed during the session, most of which will never see the light of day. For example, one does not have to go out on a limb to predict that a proposed bill that would make Connecticut a “right to work” state is unlikely to receive much serious consideration.

The Labor and Public Employees Committee will be where the “real” significant action will initially occur. Hearings on those bills deemed somewhat worthy by the Committee will likely take place in February and early March. The deadline for the Committee to approve and “forward” bills out of Committee is March 17, 2015. Bills affecting labor and employment issues may also emerge from other committees (such as the Judiciary Committee).

While it is difficult to forecast with scientific certainty as to what the General Assembly may consider, it appears that the issue of mandating time-off or “holiday pay” for certain “family holidays” will come up. Bills from prior sessions that may also re-emerge include the broadening of free speech protections for employees and limiting the ability of employers to monitor their employees’ use of “personal on-line accounts” (e.g., social media, e-mail). Finally, there may be further consideration of 1) unemployment compensation eligibility and benefits adjustments, 2) the installation of firm timelines for the issuance of awards by the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration and the State Board of Labor Relations, including interest arbitration awards under the Municipal Employee Relations Act, 3) retirement plans and pension benefits reforms, 4) revisions to the “prevailing wage” threshold for public construction projects, and 5) further adjustments in the investigatory and hearing procedures for the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Working Together will follow the action at the General Assembly and report on any significant developments as they may occur. Of course, there is always the potential for last minute surprises, including bill provisions emerging with little or no debate. Stay tuned.

Posted in CT General Assembly (CGA), Unemployment

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