



Employment Relations Law Certificate Program

October 29 – December 10, 2025

Course Format

- Attorney-led webinars delve into the six key areas to provide in-depth knowledge of employment law issues.
- Attendees can participate live or access the recorded webinar at their convenience.
- Course lasts two hours during the midday, and are followed by a short quiz participants can take at any time before December 31, 2025.
- Participants who complete the course will receive a Certificate in Employment Relations Law, along with 12 SHRM PDCs and 12 HRCI recertification credits.
- **When:** Held on select Wednesdays from late October to mid-December 2025. ([see Course Schedule for planned dates](#))
- **Time:** Typically live from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Central Time.*

Course Curriculum

1. Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining

- **Protected Concerted Activity**
Section 7 rights, union organizing activities, employee complaints about working conditions, and social media policies
- **Union Organizing Campaigns**
Recognizing organizing signs, permissible employer responses, unfair labor practices, election procedures, and neutrality agreements
- **Collective Bargaining Process**
Good faith bargaining obligations, mandatory vs. permissive subjects, impasse procedures, and contract administration
- **Grievance and Arbitration**
Grievance procedures, just cause standards, arbitration processes, and enforcing arbitration awards
- **Labor Relations Strategy**
Maintaining positive employee relations, communication during organizing drives, and preventive labor relations practices

2. Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity

- **Protected Classes and Characteristics**
Understanding federal protected classes (race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age 40+, disability, genetic information) and state/local additions (sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, etc.)
- **Types of Discrimination**
Disparate treatment vs. disparate impact, systemic discrimination, intersectional discrimination, and reasonable accommodations for disabilities and religious beliefs
- **Harassment Prevention and Response**
Hostile work environment vs. quid pro quo harassment, employer liability standards, complaint procedures, investigation protocols, and remedial actions
- **Hiring and Promotion Practices**
Job descriptions, interview guidelines, background checks, testing requirements, and promotion criteria that avoid discriminatory impact
- **Compliance and Documentation**
EEO-1 reporting, EEOC procedures, record retention requirements, and defending against discrimination claims

3. Wage and Hour Compliance

- **FLSA Classifications**
Exempt vs. non-exempt employee distinctions, white-collar exemptions (executive, administrative, professional), the salary basis test, and independent contractor classifications
- **Overtime Calculations**
Regular rate of pay computations, overtime premiums, compensable time, travel time, on-call time, and break periods
- **Minimum Wage Requirements**
Federal and state minimum wages, tipped employee wages, subminimum wages, and living wage ordinances
- **Record-Keeping and Auditing**
Required payroll records, time-tracking systems, record retention periods, and conducting wage and hour audits
- **State Law Variations**
Understanding how state laws can provide greater protections than federal law and ensuring compliance with the most restrictive requirements

4. Employee Benefits and Leave

- **FMLA Administration**
Eligibility requirements, qualifying events, intermittent leave, certification processes, job restoration rights, and interaction with other leave laws
- **Health and Retirement Benefits**
ERISA fiduciary responsibilities, COBRA administration, ACA compliance, 401(k) management, and benefit plan communications
- **State and Local Leave Laws**
Paid family leave, sick leave ordinances, pregnancy disability leave, and coordinating multiple leave entitlements
- **Benefit Plan Design and Communication**
Summary plan descriptions, open enrollment procedures, HIPAA privacy requirements, and benefits administration
- **Leave Coordination and Documentation**
Managing concurrent leave entitlements, medical certifications, return-to-work procedures, and avoiding retaliation

5. Employment Termination and At-Will Employment

- **At-Will Employment Exceptions**
Public policy violations, implied contract theories, covenant of good faith and fair dealing, and statutory protections
- **Progressive Discipline Systems**
Documentation requirements, consistency in application, due process considerations, and alternative dispute resolution
- **Termination Procedures**
Final pay requirements, benefits continuation, return of company property, non-disclosure agreements, and severance packages
- **Post-Employment Obligations**
Non-compete agreements, confidentiality obligations, references and defamation issues, and unemployment compensation
- **Litigation Prevention and Management**
Wrongful termination claims, retaliation prevention, settlement negotiations, and maintaining defensible employment decisions

6. Workplace Safety and Health

- **OSHA Standards and Compliance**
General duty clause, industry-specific standards, hazard communication, personal protective equipment, and machine guarding requirements
- **Injury and Illness Management**

Incident reporting, OSHA 300 logs, first aid vs. medical treatment, and return-to-work programs

- **Workers' Compensation**

Coverage requirements, injury reporting procedures, medical treatment guidelines, disability benefits, and fraud prevention

- **Safety Training and Communication**

Required safety training programs, hazard communication, emergency procedures, and employee safety rights

- **Inspection and Enforcement**

OSHA inspection procedures, employee rights during inspections, citation processes, and abatement requirements

Course Schedule*

10/29 Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining, Bryance Metheny, *Burr Forman*

11/5 Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity, Paige Lyle, *FordHarrison*

11/12 Wage & Hour Compliance, Steve Groom, *Dedicated General Counsel*

11/19 Employee Benefits and Leave, Mary Leigh Pirtle, *Bass Berry Sims*

12/3 Termination and At-Will Employment, Rita Roberts-Turner, *Klein Solomon Mills*

12/10 Workplace Safety and Health, Luther Wright, Jr., *Ogletree Deakins*



Course days, times and presenters subject to change.

Last Update: 10/20/25