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Do Not Overlook That Sexual Harassment Training Is Required Before December 31, 2020

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Last summer, Governor Pritzker signed sweeping changes to Illinois law that were intended to combat sexual harassment. We previously summarized these changes required by the Workplace Transparency Act here. One of the remaining requirements is that all employers provide annual anti-harassment training to all Illinois employees, with the first compliance period ending December 31, 2020. The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) has released its model training, available from the agency's website. Employers that have not yet completed harassment training for the 2020 compliance period must do so before year end.

The IDHR's training program takes the form of a series of PowerPoint slides, which employers can read to employees or distribute electronically to satisfy the basic anti-harassment training mandate for all employers. Note that restaurants and bars must provide additional anti-harassment training.

While the basic IDHR training program will satisfy minimum requirements for Illinois employers, employers can and should conduct their own training based on their individualized needs. While employers must include the information required by IDHR, employers should also consider the following additional issues:

- **Live training**. A live trainer, who is knowledgeable and experienced in dealing with issues of workplace harassment, can bring credibility to the presentation. Live training can be provided remotely, while still allowing

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the audience to ask questions.

- **Interactive and participatory programs**. Effective programs will maintain audience engagement and ensure that employees can obtain answers to their questions.
- **Harassment and discrimination generally**. While the IDHR model training materials are limited to sexual harassment, training should include all forms of illegal harassment under federal, state, and local law.
- **Tailored training**. Management and supervisory employees should be provided additional training on issues specific to their roles and positions. Programs should provide workplace-specific examples and relevant information, in order to maximize engagement.

Laner Muchin attorneys regularly conduct anti-harassment and anti-discrimination training for clients in all types of workplaces, both in person and remotely. We also regularly assist employers in developing in-house training programs and by providing “train the trainer” sessions. We encourage you to contact your Laner Muchin servicing attorney for assistance with meeting the December 31, 2020 training deadline.