

## HR LEGAL RESOURCE PROGRAM



One of the biggest exposures any public entity encounters is the handling of employees and employment-related issues. A review of Golden State Risk Management Authority's (GSRMA) loss history regarding employment lawsuits highlights this fact.

From July 1, 2000, to the present, GSRMA paid an average of \$135,000 annually for employment-related liability costs. Broken down further, annually, we average 2.2 lawsuits with an average total cost per suit of \$62,000. Average legal defense costs per suit totals \$33,000 with an average personal injury cost (award/settlement) of \$29,000 per suit.

When we review the facts surrounding these losses, we see that most, if not all, of the employers' exposure could have been significantly reduced, or outright avoided, with access to proper legal counsel prior to the employer taking any action with the employee involved.

The GSRMA Board acknowledges this exposure and directed staff to develop and implement a quality employment-related legal resource program.

We have done so and are pleased to announce that members now can seek legal advice regarding employment-related issues, *at no cost to their district*. Effective July 1, 2011, members can consult the attorneys of HUNT & JEPPELSON, LLP for answers to questions or to seek guidance on human resources matters.

HUNT & JEPPELSON has established a toll free number reserved exclusively for GSRMA members: **855-780-7099**. You may also contact them by e-mail at [rhunt@hunt-jeppson.com](mailto:rhunt@hunt-jeppson.com). We have been assured that every effort will be

made to take your phone calls when they are received, or to return your calls and respond to your e-mails as quickly as possible.

The attorneys at HUNT & JEPSON have considerable experience in a wide range of human resource matters and issues. HUNT & JEPSON works with clients in building a proactive “problem prevention” approach aimed at eliminating or minimizing claims before they happen. Thus, when an employment issues arises, early involvement of the HUNT & JEPSON attorneys will help you handle the matter as quickly and efficiently as possible, and with the least amount of liability exposure.

In addition to the free HR consultation service, HUNT & JEPSON, LLP offers a wide range of other legal services which you will be hearing more about in the coming months. In the employment arena, some of the firm’s services include:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employee Selection &amp; Hiring</li><li>• Disability and Accommodation</li><li>• Conduct HR Audits</li><li>• Conduct Training</li><li>• Discipline &amp; Termination</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing Policies &amp; Handbooks</li><li>• Discrimination &amp; Harassment</li><li>• Certified I-9 Auditors</li><li>• Litigation of Employment Claims</li><li>• Wage and Hour Issues</li></ul> |
|--|---|

Although these additional services are not included in the free HR consultation service, GSRMA is developing a program by which loss prevention funds will be available to reimburse a portion of the cost incurred when members avail themselves of these services. We also intend to partner with HUNT & JEPSON to provide additional training programs and seminars periodically.

Employment-related claims are distracting, demoralizing and costly to any organization. However, they are mostly preventable. For this reason, we are taking this aggressive approach to help minimize the risk and expense. We urge you to become as knowledgeable as possible about how best to handle HR issues and, most importantly, call the attorneys at Hunt & Jeppson as early as possible when you detect a problem may be developing.