

**HRA-ECI**

**October 2021**

OCTOBER  
MEETING

Friday, October 8th  
11:30am—1:00 pm  
Zoom Meeting

This meeting was  
approved for credits!

## **Discussion:** 2021 Benefit Trends and Benchmarking

### **Nichole Johnson, Area Vice President, Benefits & HR Consulting for Gallagher**

Nichole specializes in providing employee benefits insurance brokerage and consulting services for employers. Her expertise is in helping clients align their employee benefit strategies with their organizational goals. She serves as a liaison between employers and insurance carriers and will assist them in strategy, vendor management and ongoing support.

Nichole has been with Gallagher since 2015. She completed the Gallagher Career Associate Program for intensive training and growth in her first few years at Gallagher. She attended the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where she received her Bachelor's degree in Marketing and Business Process Management. She is a licensed insurance professional in the state of Illinois. Lastly, she is on the Junior Board for the Chicago chapter of Boys Hope Girls Hope and serves on the Corporate Board of Trustees for the Associated Colleges of Illinois.

## **Big Companies are Raising Wages for Lowest-Paid Workers**

Many big companies are raising their internal minimum wages and setting the bar for other employers to follow suit. Companies like Bank of America have promised to raise their starting rate to \$21/hr and up to \$25/hr by 2025. Amazon has increased their internal minimum from \$15/hr established in 2017 to \$18/hr.

This could lead to continued inflation as employers raising their employees' pay may hand customers the bill for increased overhead. However, there can be some positives coming from a wage increase. When it comes to turnover, it costs 1.5 to 2 times salary to replace an employee according to Amy Mosher, chief people officer at an HR technology firm. If higher pay can decrease turnover, companies may see some cost savings. Employers may also adapt to increasing wages by reducing labor needed to operate by investing in automation or fewer people on each shift.

~Source: SHRM: *Big Companies Are Raising Wages for Lowest-Paid Workers* by Stephen Miller, CEBS

## **Federal Contractors, Private Employers Confused about COVID-19 Vaccine Rules**

The federal government recently issued guidance on implementing the White House COVID-19 vaccination mandate for federal contractors, but many private-sector employers are still waiting for OSHA to issue an ETS requiring employees to get vaccinated or submit to regular testing.

**Federal Contractors:** On September 24th, a December 8th deadline for employees of federal contractors (with some exceptions) was set to get vaccinated. The Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council followed up on September 30th with a memo on implementing the mandate.

**Private Employers:** Biden announced on September 9th private employers with at least 100 employees must require their employees to get vaccinated or be tested weekly for COVID. OSHA was set to release guidance in the 2-8 weeks following that announcement and employers are still waiting.

Common questions employers have are: How will the 100-employee threshold be counted? Will employers be required to conduct proof of vaccination? What type of testing will be required? Will remote employees be covered? Start preparing now with the information you can to get your business ready for if and when this mandate goes into effect.

~Source: SHRM *Federal Contractors, Private Employers Confused About COVID-19 Vaccine Rules* by Lisa Nagele-Piazza, J.D., SHRM-SCP

## How to Avoid the 'Resignation Tsunami'

Are you having a tough time keeping employees? COVID has broadened the gap between what employers want and what employees seek. Employees are leaving to go to employers with more flexibility. So, what can you do? Consider the below points and check out the full article.

- ◇ Exercise Empathetic Curiosity
- ◇ Communicate and Listen
- ◇ One Size Doesn't Fit All

~Source: SHRM *Viewpoint: How to Combat the 'Resignation Tsunami'* by Jennifer Moss

## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and it is a good time to remind your employees of the importance of their health and well being. This can include reminding them of the importance of regular women's wellness visits and check ups and educating employees on mammograms: when to start and how often to get them.



## EEOC Makes Final Extension to EEO-1 Reporting Deadline

Covered employers now have until October 25, 2021 to file their 2019 and 2020 EEO-1 reports. This was originally extended to August 23rd and has been pushed out due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

**Do you need to file?** Typically businesses with 100 or more employees or some federal contractors with at least 50 employees must submit an EEO-1 form.

~SHRM *EEOC Makes Final Extension to EEO-1 Reporting*

*Deadline* by Lisa Nagele-Piazza, J.D., SHRM-SCP

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