

Press Coverage | October 10, 2023

How to Avoid Toxic Spillovers at Work

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[Evan Gibbs](#)

Evan Gibbs, a partner in the Labor + Employment Practice Group of Troutman Pepper, was quoted in the October 10, 2023 *Health Payer Specialist* article, [“How to Avoid Toxic Spillovers at Work.”](#)

Play by the rules

Companies have policies on their books, but they don't always follow them, said **Evan Gibbs**, a partner with **Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders** who handles employment matters.

“You have to walk the walk, in addition to talking the talk in a written policy,” he said. This means taking all complaints seriously and investigating them. Sometimes companies do only a cursory investigation of a complaint or investigate it but with no real consequences. A company's HR policies need to have teeth to be effective, he said.

Provide the right training

Companies should consider beefing up their HR training for employees and managers. Many times, training will cover obvious infractions — what to do if someone slaps someone on the butt or draws hate symbols in the workplace, which rarely happens nowadays, Gibbs said. Instead, training should be focused on more nuanced areas where problems tend to crop up, such as managing personal biases and giving feedback to employees, he said.

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