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# That's What The Money Is For: Pay Lessons From 'Mad Men'

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Tracey Diamond, a partner in Troutman Pepper Locke's Labor + Employment Practice Group, was quoted in the May 19, 2025 *Law360* article, "[That's What The Money Is For: Pay Lessons From 'Mad Men'](#)."

If Don doesn't do any work at all on these trips and if he's not entitled to paid vacation for that time, the company can count that as unpaid time off, for example, said Tracey Diamond, a partner with management-side firm Troutman Pepper Locke LLP.

"But now he is thinking about work while he's meditating, and theoretically, he should be getting paid for that whole week because he was thinking about work during that time," she said. "Of course, he came up with this brilliant Coca-Cola ad in the show, so he should be paid for that brilliant thought."

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It's best practice for employers when they're letting employees go to treat those employees consistently in terms of the severance they are provided, Diamond said. Unequal pay is not just about salary, she said. It includes types of compensation like separation pay.

"Many companies have a standard separation or severance policy or practice that is based on years of service, and sometimes, it's based on type of positions, rather than having discretion to decide how much severance to give any given individual," she said.

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