

Norwalk Chamber Welcomes SBDC Mike Daniel



Mike Daniel of the SBDC receives his renewal plaque from Norwalk Chamber President, Toni Grijalva, Cerritos College.



Seated left to right are Norwalk City Council Member Cheri Kelley, Ron VandenBosch, ServiceMASTER Professional, Chamber Board Member Vickie Yahn, ServiceMASTER Professional, Melissa Rivera, NLMUSD and Ambassador Sue Arthur.

The Norwalk Chamber of Commerce welcomed Mike Daniel of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) as our guest speaker at our November networking breakfast. The focus of Mike's presentation was increasing your market share. Mike focused on taking a good look at the product or service that your business offers. The audience was then asked to share what benefit their business or service provided. He also asked participants to look at who their competition is and asked the business owners "what do you do better than your competition." Mike shared that to create market growth you needed to "focus on what your target customer thinks is important." Next was to find out what your target customer is worth over a lifetime of business and find the best marketing channel to use to reach that target customer. Other activities Mike had the audience participate in included setting daily activities to reach your goals and finding a tool to measure your success. The SBDC is an organization that provides business support to established businesses or to those wishing to start a new business. They offer no cost one-on-one consulting provided by expert business advisors in the following areas:

- Business Planning
- Internet Services
- Marketing
- Government Contracts
- Legal
- Finance
- Human Resources
- International Trade

In addition, they offer access to their SBDC business library, low-cost workshops, seminars and conferences that provide current and practical information on business topics ranging from the basics to more advanced business management skills. If you need business support on any kind, contact the SBDC directly at 562-938-5100.



Attending the networking breakfast are Karen Toth, Whittier Chamber Ambassador, Joe Derthick, AFLAC, Holly Noble, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Chamber President Toni Grijalva, Cerritos College, Cima Johnson, Connect Staffing, Inc.



Networking at breakfast are David Aguilar, Helpline Youth Counseling, Gloria Rodriguez, Norwalk Public Safety and Leo Spencer, Paychex, Inc.



Enjoying their breakfast and spending time networking are Ambassador Virginia Zuno, Norwalk DoubleTree Hotel, Marilee Stefenhagen, Norwalk Soroptimist, Chamber Board Members Karla Thompson, Thompson Bookkeeping and Gordon Stefenhagen, Norwalk Realty.



Norwalk Chamber President Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College and Chamber Executive Director Vivian Hansen present renewal plaque to Vickie Yahn of ServiceMASTER Professional.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Happy Holidays! As Norwalk Chamber celebrates 91 years of serving the business community in the City of Norwalk, I want to assure you that Norwalk Chamber is dedicated to creating community partnerships with our public and private sectors in an effort to cooperatively identify and resolve local and regional issues. We are devoted to being the ultimate business resource for our members. Whether through networking, promotion or advocacy, we are committed to helping your business and our communities thrive. I encourage you to become an active chamber member and take advantage of all that Norwalk Chamber has to offer.

Welcome to our newest Norwalk Chamber members: Paychex, Inc., American Legion Post 359, Bill's Barber Shop, Stonebridge Memorial and MAPFRE Insurance. **We look forward to serving you for many years to come!**

Our November Creating Connections Luncheon/Ambassador Meeting was held at Café n Stuff on November 18. Our monthly Creating Connections Luncheons provide our chamber members with an excellent opportunity to network with other businesses while enjoying lunch at one of our local restaurants. Our next **Creating Connections Luncheon/Ambassador Meeting** will be on **December 23rd** at **Norwalk Outback Steakhouse**. I hope you can join us!

We held a **Business Connections Breakfast Mixer** on **November 12** at **7:30am** at **DoubleTree Norwalk**. In addition to networking with other local businesses, our members in attendance received great tips on increasing your market share from Mike Daniel from the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). On November 20, **Shakey's Pizza Parlor** hosted an **After Hours Mixer**. Members enjoyed samples of their delicious pizzas, mojoes and drinks. Darrell Marble, General Manager of Shakey's Norwalk, introduced us to his staff and encouraged us to consider Shakey's for our next party, meeting or group fundraiser. Our **Dine Out Norwalk** campaign from November 16 through November 22 was a great success! Thank you to all who dined at one or more of our member restaurants during that time. Don't forget to turn in your receipt(s) to the Norwalk Chamber Office by December 8 to be entered into the drawing. The winner will be announced at our Holiday Mixer on December 11! Thanks, also, to all who shopped Norwalk on November 29 for **Small Business Saturday!**

This month, I encourage you to participate in the **City of Norwalk Social Services Center's Angel Tree Project** (if you aren't already). This program serves hundreds of needy children locally. Stop by the Chamber Office to pick your angel, purchase a gift of clothing for him or her and return your wrapped gift to the Chamber Office by December 8. Please mark your calendar for our upcoming **Holiday Mixer** on **December 11** at **5pm** at **Sproul Reception Center (The Barn) at Norwalk Park**. Wear your Ugly Sweater (you may win a prize!) and join us for this fun event which will include food, drink, networking, an opportunity drawing for a Wheel Barrel of Holiday Cheer and a Silent Auction for some great holiday gift items! Santa and Mrs. Claus have promised to make an appearance and we have other great surprise holiday activities planned! For more information about this event, please go to our website at: www.NorwalkChamber.com or contact our chamber office at 562.864.7785.

I want to assure you that your Norwalk Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Ambassadors and Chamber Staff will continue to provide exemplary programs and services to help our local businesses succeed as we look forward to a brighter economic future.

On behalf of my Norwalk Chamber Board of Directors and Ambassadors, and our Chamber Staff, I want to thank you for your chamber membership. At the close of another year, we gratefully pause to wish you joy, peace and prosperity this Holiday Season! We look forward to serving you, your business and our community in 2015!

Sincerely,

Toni Grijalva
2014-15 President
Norwalk Chamber of Commerce

Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
12040 Foster Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 55
Norwalk, CA

NORWALK CHAMBER BUSINESS CONNECTIONS (NCBC) is the Official Publication of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce.

Norwalk Chamber of Commerce

12040 Foster Road,
Norwalk, CA 90650
Phone: 562.864.7785
FAX: 562.864.8539
Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
www.norwalkchamber.com
info@norwalkchamber.com

Facebook:
http://on.fb.me/oB5EUM

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
EDITOR, NCBC**

VIVIAN HANSEN

**STAFF WRITER
CAREN SPILSBURY**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, December 11th
Annual Holiday Mixer
5pm to 7pm
Sproul Reception Center
12239 Sproul
Norwalk CA 90650
Bring a non-perishable
Item to donate to the
Norwalk Food Pantry

Tuesday, December 23rd
"Creating Connections"
Monthly Luncheon
Annual Ambassador
Holiday Gift Exchange
12 Noon
Outback Restaurant

Wednesday, January 21, 2015
Norwalk City Council
Candidates Forum
Norwalk City Hall
7-9 pm

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

New Members

Mapfre USA
Zoila Miranda
11660 E. Firestone Blvd.
Norwalk CA 90650
213-364-4105
zmiranda@mapfrusa.com

Bill's Barber Shop
David Rosa
12012 E. Rosecrans Ave.
Norwalk CA 90650
562-802-1218

Stonebridge Memorial
Tom Chapman
14624 Carmenita Rd.
Norwalk CA 90650
562-404-1287
www.stonebridgememorial.com

Renewing Members

The following companies and individuals renewed their membership with the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and the services we provide are made possible by their support.

39 Years
CR & R
Dan Stepanian
562-944-4716

22 Years
Helpline Youth Counseling
Jeff Farbor
562-864-3722

9 Years
Small Business Development Center
Mike Daniel
562-938-5100

38 Years
Dr. Paul Crismon
562-864-6535

21 Years
Helpline Youth Counseling
Jeff Farbor
562-864-3722

5 Years
Office Depot
562-406-8686

29 Years
Costco Wholesale
Stephanie Anda
562-944-4716

13 Years
F.O.C.I.S.
Reggie Bowie
562-807-6464

4 Years
Sullivan Management
Jennifer Sullivan
562-863-8078

24 Years
Norwalk Dialysis
Carlos Jacobs
562-929-7430

10 Years
Bernabe Community Center
Brad Reed
562-863-1899

3 Years
Smart & Final
Myra Galvan
562-863-7057

AMBASSADORS CORNER



Norwalk Chamber President Toni Grijalva presents a renewal plaque to Michael Batory of Walgreens.



Tracy Polley of Kelco Sales receives their membership renewal plaque from Toni Grijalva, Norwalk Chamber President.



Chamber President Toni Grijalva presents a renewal plaque to Spiros Hondrogiannis of Burger Basket.



Stephanie Anda of Costco Wholesale receives a 29 year renewal plaque from Chamber President, Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College.

MONTHLY "CREATING CONNECTIONS" LUNCHEON

"The Norwalk Chamber invites all who are able to attend our monthly "Creating Connections" luncheon and Chamber Ambassadors meeting. The November luncheon took place at Café n' Stuff located in Downey CA.

Each month Norwalk chamber members support our businesses by meeting for lunch and networking. Please join us each month. Good food, good people and a

great opportunity to make new business contacts.

Our next "Creating Connections" Luncheon takes place on Tuesday, December 23rd, 2014 at 12noon at Outback Restaurant in Norwalk. Visit our website at www.norwalkchamber.com to find out about future networking luncheons."

From the Membership Desk...



David Rosa of Bill's Barber Shop receives his new member plaque from Chamber President Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College.



Chamber President Toni Grijalva presents a membership renewal plaque to David Aguilar of Helpline Youth Counseling.



New Member Leo Spencer of Paychex, Inc. receives his new member plaque from President Toni Grijalva.



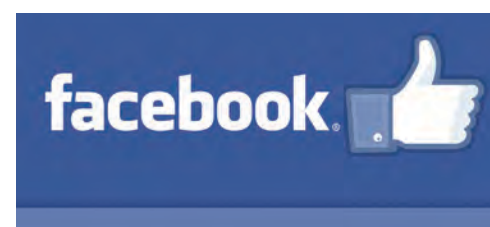
Norwalk Chamber President Toni Grijalva, Cerritos College, presents a membership renewal plaque to Gordon Stefenhagen of Norwalk Realty.

The Norwalk Chamber is growing again, and we want to welcome our November new members to the Chamber! Need a haircut? Bill's Barber Shop, located at 12012 E. Rosecrans Ave., here in Norwalk, has been in business here in Norwalk for 59 years. David Rosa is the current owner of the shop, and both his son and grandson are there cutting hair! We invite you to visit this local icon of the Norwalk community and learn more about the Rosa family along with getting a haircut! Another new member here in Norwalk is Stonebridge Memorial, and owner Tom Chapman. Stonebridge Memorial is here to offer support in planning for final services. They are located at 14624 Carmenita Rd right here in Norwalk and are here to help you honor the life of your loved ones. For additional information from Stonebridge Memorial, you can reach them at 562-404-1287. Lastly we welcome Zoila Miranda of MAPFRE Insurance. MAPFRE Insurance offers home, auto, life and business insurance. To contact Zoila and get a free insurance quote, call 213-364-4105. We invite you all to meet our newest Chamber members by visiting their businesses or attending a Chamber event and meeting them in person!

**MEMBERSHIP SERVICES DIRECTOR
CAREN SPILSBURY**

Want to Boost Your Companies Exposure?

Like Us on Facebook



www.facebook.com/Norwalk Chamber

Remember if they're looking at the Chamber they're looking at you!

~Like Us and We will Like you Back~

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT

We're Still Working For You - Even If You Don't Have Time to Participate in Any Events

As a Norwalk Chamber Member you automatically receive all the following benefits - **No effort required:**

- Chamber's website listing - a direct link to your website to advertise and promote your Company
- Monthly Norwalk Chamber Business Connections Newsletter with valuable information that can assist you in marketing and managing your business
- Tax deduction for your Chamber membership investment * consult your tax professional
- Office Depot Savings Program (Small Business average savings 15 - 20% on office products)
- Exclusive customer referral service - we only refer Chamber Members

- Collective business voice through the Chamber's legislative advocacy program - we monitor legislation in all areas that affect the business community
- Promote Shop Local Programs
- Offer Member 2 Member Discount Programs
- Opportunities to promote your business through your provided testimonials, press releases

Remember, this is only the benefits of membership if you do not participate in any programs, events or cost savings. This is what your business receives for doing absolutely nothing but being a member. Imagine being ACTIVE!

-Vivian Hansen

SOCIAL SECURITY COLUMN

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS CHILDREN ALL YEAR LONG

By Alma A. Echeverria

Social Security Public Relations Specialist in Montebello, CA

With holidays and vacations, December is often considered a time to focus on the children in our lives. Whether we're taking the kids to visit Santa, buying Hanukkah gifts, or volunteering for a toy drive, children are at the heart of the holiday season. We at Social Security definitely know a thing or two about helping children.

Did you know that we issue Social Security numbers for children, typically during the first weeks or months of their life? You can learn about Social Security numbers for children by reading our publication, Social Security Numbers For Children, available at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs. A child needs a Social Security number if he or she is going to have a bank account, if a relative is buying savings bonds for the child, if the child will have medical coverage, or if the child will receive government services. You'll also need a Social Security number for a child to claim him or her on your tax returns. Typically, the hospital will ask if you want to apply for a Social Security number for your newborn as part of the birth registration process. This is the easiest and fastest way to apply.

If you wait to apply, you will have to visit a Social Security office and you must:

- Complete an

Application For a Social Security Card (Form SS-5).

- Show us original documents proving your child's U.S. citizenship, age, and identity.

- Show us documents proving your identity.

Remember, a child age 12 or older requesting an original Social Security number must appear in person for the interview, even though a parent or guardian will sign the application on the child's behalf.

You can imagine the many diverse needs that children around the world have. The children of some countries aren't as fortunate, and don't have the strong social safety net that we have in the United States. We work hard at Social Security to protect the needs of children, particularly if one or both of their parents are disabled, retired, or deceased. These benefits for children provide necessities, and help many minors complete high school. You can learn more by reading our publication, Benefits For Children, available at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

Children with disabilities are among our most vulnerable citizens. Social Security is dedicated to helping those with qualifying disabilities

and their families through the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

To qualify for SSI:

- The child must have a physical or mental condition, or a combination of conditions, resulting in "marked and severe functional limitations." This means that the condition(s) must severely limit your child's activities.

- The child's condition(s) must be severe, last for at least 12 months, or be expected to result in death.

- If your child's condition(s) does not result in "marked and severe limitations", or does not result in those limitations for at least 12 months, your child will not qualify for SSI.

•• The child must not be working and earning more than \$1,090 a month in 2015. (This amount usually changes every year.) If he or she is working and earning that much money, your child will not be eligible for disability benefits.

Learn the details about benefits for children by reading our publication, Benefits for Children with Disabilities, available at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs. Visit www.socialsecurity.gov/people/kids to learn more about all we do to care for children. Caring for the next generation is a national priority, during the holidays and all year long.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

PIH Health Hospital - Whittier Earns Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® Recognition

PIH Health Hospital - Whittier has been recognized as a 2013 Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® by The Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of healthcare organizations in the United States.

PIH Health Hospital - Whittier was recognized in The Joint Commission's 2014 annual report "America's Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety," for attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measure performance for core measures in the following areas: heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and surgical care.

"PIH Health is proud to be named a *Top Performer* as it recognizes the knowledge, teamwork and dedication of our entire hospital staff," said James R. West, PIH Health president and chief executive officer.

The *Top Performer* program recognizes hospitals for improving performance on evidence-based interventions that increase the chances of healthy outcomes for patients with certain conditions,

including heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care, children's asthma, stroke, venous thromboembolism and perinatal care, as well as for inpatient psychiatric services and immunizations.

"We understand that what matters most to patients is the quality and safety of care they receive," said Judy Pugach, vice president, Enterprise Quality, Patient Safety, Accreditation and Licensing at PIH Health.

"That is why improving positive patient outcomes through evidence-based care processes is a top priority at PIH Health."

For more information about the *Top Performer* program, please visit www.jointcommission.org.

About PIH Health

PIH Health is a regional nonprofit healthcare delivery

network that serves more than 2.1 million residents in the Los Angeles, Orange County and San Gabriel Valley region. The fully integrated network is comprised of PIH Health Hospital - Whittier and PIH Health Hospital - Downey and features a host of outpatient medical offices, a multispecialty medical group, home health and hospice care, as well as heart, cancer and emergency services. Recognized by Truven Health Analytics for the past two consecutive years and Hospitals and Health Networks as one of the nation's top hospital systems for best practices and cutting-edge advancements in both quality and healthcare technology, PIH Health also invests millions each year in community education and free and low-cost services to support those with the greatest need. For more information, visit PIHHealth.org.

LABOR LAW CORNER

Paid Family Leave Waiting Period Waived for Delayed Baby Bonding

Question: My employee took a pregnancy disability leave for three months, and then came back to work as soon as she was released by her doctor. Four months later, she now wants to take baby bonding leave for eight weeks. Will she be able to collect Paid Family Leave insurance, and if so, will there be a new seven-day waiting period?

California's Paid Family Leave (PFL) insurance program provides up to six weeks of wage replacement when an employee takes time off for baby bonding or to care for a seriously ill family member.

Waiting Period

Normally there is a seven-day waiting period before PFL benefits are paid. However, if a claim for PFL for baby bonding is made following a State Disability Insurance claim for pregnancy, the normal seven-day waiting period for PFL is waived. This is true even if the baby bonding time is not taken immediately following the end of the pregnancy disability leave.

Thus, your employee should be able to collect PFL for the first six weeks of her baby bonding leave without serving any additional waiting period.

Example

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) gives the following example to illustrate this situation. Note that PFL benefits are referred to here as "Family Temporary Disability Insurance," which is the name for PFL benefits used in California's Unemployment Insurance Code.

"Claimant B gives birth on May 9, 2004, and receives State Disability Insurance benefits through June 19, 2004 for her pregnancy claim. She does not establish a Family Temporary Disability Insurance (PFL) claim for bonding before returning to work in January 2005. After working through March 20, 2005, Claimant B establishes a claim for Family Temporary Disability Insurance (PFL) benefits beginning March 21, 2005 to bond with her new child.

"Claimant B may receive up to six weeks of Family Temporary Disability Insurance (PFL) benefits from March 21, 2005 through May 1, 2005, if otherwise eligible. Because Claimant B served a waiting period on her State Disability Insurance pregnancy claim, she is not required to serve an additional waiting period." (22 CCR, Section 3303 (b)-1(a))

The Labor Law Helpline is a service to California Chamber of Commerce preferred and executive members. For expert explanations of labor laws and Cal/OSHA regulations, not legal counsel for specific situations, call (800) 348-2262 or submit your question at www.hrcalifornia.com

SAVE THE DATE

Norwalk City Council Candidates Forum

No Cost to Attend Refreshments Provided



Join Us And Meet the Candidates

January 21, 2015
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
12700 Norwalk Blvd, Norwalk
City Hall Council Chambers

Norwalk Chamber Invites
You and Your Employees to be
our GUESTS at our Annual

Holiday Mixer

Thursday, December 11, 2014

**Norwalk Park "The Barn"
Sproul Reception Center**
12239 Sproul Street, Norwalk
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Refreshments Will be Served

**OPPORTUNITY DRAWING
SILENT AUCTION
UGLY SWEATER CONTEST
& OTHER SURPRISE HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES**

To RSVP Please Call (562) 864-7785

**Bring a non-perishable food item for the Norwalk Food
Pantry and receive a raffle ticket for a special drawing!**

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

CalChamber Releases List of New Employment Laws

The California Chamber of Commerce has released a list of new employment laws scheduled to take effect in 2015 or earlier that will have an impact on businesses in California.

Some of the new laws for 2015, such as mandatory paid sick leave, make significant changes to California's legal landscape. Other new laws make changes to different parts of existing law or may affect only employers in specified industries, such as farming.

Unless specified, the following list of new legislation goes into effect on January 1, 2015.

More details are available in a free CalChamber white paper, available at www.calchamber.com/newlaws2015.

Leaves of Absence

• **Mandatory Paid Sick Leave.** AB 1522, the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act of 2014, requires employers to provide paid sick leave to any employee who worked in California for 30 days. The effective date for employers to begin providing the paid sick leave benefit is July 1, 2015.

The law contains many different nuances, such as detailed recordkeeping and notice requirements, including a new poster requirement. The law also contains penalties for noncompliance.

• **Time Off for Emergency Duty: Expanded Category.** AB 2536 adds new personnel to the list of employees eligible for protected time off for emergency duty.

Employee Protections

• **Protections for Unpaid Interns and Volunteers.** AB 1443 adds unpaid interns and volunteers to the list of individuals protected from harassment under the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA).

• **Nondiscrimination: Driver's Licenses for Undocumented Persons.** AB 1660 makes it a violation of FEHA for an employer to discriminate against an individual because he/she holds or presents a driver's license issued to undocumented persons who can submit satisfactory proof of identity and California residency. These driver's licenses are scheduled to start being issued on January 1, 2015.

• **Immigration-Related Protections.** AB 2751 expands the definition of an unfair immigration-related practice to include threatening to file or filing a false report or complaint with any state or federal agency. Current law extended the protection only to reports filed with the police.

• **Prohibition of Discrimination Against Public Assistance Recipients: Public Reports.** AB 1792 prohibits discrimination and retaliation against employees receiving public assistance, which is defined as meaning the Medi-Cal program.

• **Harassment Prevention Training: Prevention of Abusive Conduct.** AB 2053 requires employers that are subject to the mandatory sexual harassment prevention training requirement for supervisors to include a component on the prevention of "abusive conduct," beginning January 1, 2015. "Abusive conduct" is specifically defined by the new law.

• **Harassment Prevention Training: Farm Labor Contractors.** SB 1087 imposes specific sexual harassment prevention training requirements on farm labor contractors, including a yearly training requirement for supervisory employees and training for nonsupervisory employees at the time of hire and every two years thereafter. The required content for the training is not as involved as AB 1825 training.

More Employer Liability When Contracting for Labor

AB 1897 is a sweeping new law that will increase liability on employers who contract for labor. The purpose of the law, which goes into effect January 1, 2015, is to hold companies accountable for wage-and-hour violations when using staffing agencies or other labor contractors to supply workers.

To Whom Does This Law Apply? Any "client employer," which is defined as a business entity with 25 or more workers that obtains or is provided at least six (6) workers to perform labor within the usual course of business from one labor contractor or various labor contractors. In other words, this law could apply to employers who use staffing agencies or other labor contractors to supply workers.

Not 'Client Employer' The following business entities are excluded from the definition of "client employer" or from the liability imposed under the provisions of this bill, under the following conditions and contracts:

- Business entity with fewer than 25 workers (including those hired directly and those obtained from or provided by any labor contractor);
- Business entity that has five (5) or fewer workers from a labor contractor or various labor contractors at any given time;
- Motor carrier of property that contracts with or engages another motor carrier of property to provide transportation services;
- Employer that utilizes a third-party motor carrier of property with interstate or intrastate operating authority to ship or receive freight;
- Cable operators, telephone corporations and direct-to-home satellite providers that contract with a company to build, install, maintain or perform repair work as long as the name of the contractor is visible on employee uniforms and vehicles;
- Motor club that contracts with third parties to provide motor club services if the name of the contractor is visible on the contractor's vehicles; or
- The state or any political subdivision of the state.

Not 'Labor Contractor' The following entities are specifically excluded from the definition of "labor contractor" and, therefore, the provisions of the bill will not be triggered if they are the ones providing the labor to the client employer:

- A bona fide nonprofit community-based organization that provides services to workers;
- A bona fide labor organization or apprenticeship program or hiring hall operated pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement;
- A motion picture payroll services company; or
- A third party who is a party to an employee leasing arrangement if the employee leasing arrangement contractually obligates the client employer to assume all civil legal responsibility and civil liability under the law.

Exempt Employees: A worker does not include an employee who is properly classified as exempt from the payment of overtime pursuant to the administrative, executive or professional exemption in the Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders and, therefore, if the contract is for employees that fall within any of these exemptions, the provisions of the law will not apply.

What Does the Law Do? Imposes all civil legal responsibility and liability on the client employer for any wage-and-hour violations committed by the labor contractor for the labor contractor's employees it supplied pursuant to the contract with the client employer.

Get Ready for Holiday Shopping Season

Holiday shopping season is about to head into high gear. For small retailers, this season can make or break your annual sales. Here are three last-minute tips to make sure you're ready to sell.

- Prep your website.
- If you sell online, test your ecommerce website to be sure it can handle increased traffic loads. Make sure your shipping rates and return policies are clearly stated and easy to find from every page of your site, that checkout works smoothly and that users can quickly access help -- whether by phone, chat or email-when they have a problem.
- Prep your team.

If you have a brick-and-mortar store, staff up with temporary or part-time employees if needed. You're competing with ecommerce sites and "showrooming," so make sure your salespeople are well-trained and friendly, that they are knowledgeable about your

Wage and Hour

Several new laws will increase employers' wage-and-hour obligations in 2015. Many of the new laws in the wage-and-hour arena deal with increasing penalties and expanding liability, instead of imposing significant new obligations on employers.

• **Increased Liability for Employers That Contract for Labor.** AB 1897 imposes liability on employers who contract for labor. The purpose of the law is to hold companies accountable for wage-and-hour violations when they use staffing agencies or other labor contractors to supply workers.

• **Rest and Recovery Periods.** SB 1360 confirms that recovery periods that are taken pursuant to heat illness regulations are paid breaks and count as hours worked. SB 1360 reiterates what is already in existing law in this area and was passed simply to clear up any confusion employers may have had.

• **Waiting Time Penalties.** AB 1723 expands available enforcement mechanisms for assessing waiting time penalties when an employer willfully fails to timely pay wages to a resigned or discharged employee. AB 2743 provides a waiting time penalty if unionized theatrical and concert venue employers violate any agreed upon timeframe for paying final wages contained in a collective bargaining agreement.

• **Protections for Complaints Under the Labor Code.** AB 2751 clarifies that the \$10,000 penalty against an employer who discriminates or retaliates against an employee who complains of Labor Code violations will be awarded to the employee or employees who "suffered the violation."

• **Timeframe for Recovery of Wages: Liquidated Damages.** AB 2074 states that a lawsuit seeking to recover liquidated damages for minimum wage violations can be filed any time before the expiration of the statute of limitations that applies to the underlying wage claim, which is three years.

• **Child Labor Law Violations: Increased Remedies.** AB 2288 provides additional penalties for violations of California laws regarding employment of minors, including a penalty of \$25,000 to \$50,000 for "Class A" violations involving minors 12 years of age or younger.

• **Foreign Labor Contractors.** SB 477 is noteworthy for employers that use foreign labor contractors to recruit foreign workers for California assignments. In part, it requires foreign labor contractors to meet registration, licensing and bonding requirements by July 1, 2016.

• **Prevailing Wages.** Bills signed include AB 1939, allowing a contractor to bring an action against "hiring parties" to recover any increased costs incurred because the work was performed on a covered public work subject to prevailing wage laws.

Background Checks

- **Criminal History Information in Public Contracts.**

AB 1650 requires contractors who bid on state contracts involving on-site construction-related services to certify that they will not ask applicants for on-site construction-related jobs to disclose information

concerning criminal history at the time of an initial employment application.

• **Services to Minors.** AB 1852 requires a business that provides specified services to minors to provide a written notice to the parent or guardian of the minor receiving those services. The written notice should address the business's policies relating to employee criminal background checks.

Workplace Safety

• **Penalties for Failure to Abate Safety Hazards.** Cal/OSHA can require an employer to abate (fix) serious workplace safety violations and also issue civil penalties. An employer can appeal the citation. AB 1634, in effect, prohibits the state Occupational Safety and Health Appeals Board from modifying civil penalties for abatement or credit for abatement unless the employer has fixed the violation.

• **Email for Workplace Safety Reports.** AB 326 allows employers to email their reports of a work-related serious injury, illness or death to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health.

• **Workplace Violence Prevention Plans: Hospitals.** SB 1299 requires Cal/OSHA to adopt standards by January 1, 2016, that require specified types of hospitals, including general acute care hospitals or acute psychiatric hospitals, to adopt workplace violence prevention plans as part of the hospitals' injury and illness prevention plans.

For more in depth information please read a free CalChamber white paper, available at www.calchamber.com/newlaws2015.



St. Lic. #271767

NORWALK/LA MIRADA

Plumbing

Heating & Air Conditioning

11661 Firestone Blvd. • Norwalk

(562) 868-7777
don@laplumber.com

\$20
OFF
WITH
THIS
AD!

How to Recover From a Bad Online Review

By Melinda Emerson, the Small Biz Lady

Online review platforms are a boon for your business...except when they're not. One negative review on a site like Yelp can have a tremendous impact on the traffic that comes (or doesn't) through your door. Everyone knows that a single bad review doesn't mean a business is horrible, and when they see the company actively trying to remedy the situation, they might be even more interested in becoming customers of yours.

Here are a few measures you can take to minimize the impact of a bad online review.

1. Be on the Lookout

Now, I'm not suggesting you *expect* negative reviews and start watching for them, but it's wise to be proactive in paying attention to *all* reviews for your company online. This helps you stay tuned in to what your customers are feeling about your business, and allows you to make tweaks or changes to improve as necessary.

Use Google alerts to monitor your brand online so, you can act quickly if and when you do get a negative review.

2. Respond Immediately

The faster you react, the better the results. A negative review that you didn't catch might be what keeps people considering your business from actually visiting it, so be on top of every review and be ready to respond.

What does responding look like? First, offer an apology. If a customer complains about a bad experience with your brand, don't get defensive. Remember the adage, "the customer is always right." It might be tempting to get into a mud-slinging contest, but remember your goal here is to keep this bad review from dissuading others from shopping with you.

3. Offer a Solution Offline

If you can, pick up the phone and call your customer. Often people just want to be heard. If you run a restaurant and a reviewer complained about the food, offer to let them come back on the house. Offer a refund, a replacement, or something else that will leave the dissatisfied customer feeling whole again. They will appreciate that the owner to the time to personally respond.

4. Make Your Response Public

Yelp and other online review sites typically allow businesses to respond publicly to any feedback. This is your opportunity to let others who visit that page see that you're proactive in dealing with issues, and that you're eager to please your clientele. You should also respond to positive reviews as well.

5. Follow Up

If your disgruntled customer does take you up on your offer to come back and try your company again, make sure you're the one to interact with them, and apologize again. Make sure they understand how much you want to make them happy.

Once they're happy, ask if they'd consider updating their review. It's imperative that others see the end result of this situation, and that you successfully turned around a bad experience for this particular customer.

When Rogue Reviews Happen

Sometimes people just want to complain. It might not even be that the food was cold or that the staff was rude, but they just want some attention. In this case, go through all the steps here, but don't expect them to come back to your business to try again.

There's simply not much you can do about "bad reviewers" other than encourage more customers to leave positive reviews so these negative ones get buried. If you have one 1-star review out of 100, potential customers will take that one with a grain of salt and focus on the others.

Negative online reviews don't have to ruin your business. By being proactive and managing your response to a negative comment, you can turn an unhappy customer into a satisfied one, and keep attracting new business.

About the author Melinda F. Emerson, "SmallBizLady" is America's #1 Small Business Expert. She is an expert on small business start up, business development, and social media marketing. Forbes magazine named her the #1 woman for entrepreneurs to follow on Twitter. She publishes a resource blog www.succeedasyourownboss.com Melinda is also the bestselling author of *Become Your Own Boss in 12 Months* and the ebook *How To Become a Social Media Ninja*.

**Please call Caren Spilsbury
for more information on how to become a
Norwalk Chamber Member!
(562) 864-7785**