

Raquel Alvarenga in HR Magazine: 'How the New COVID-19 Relief Package Impacts Employers'

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PRACTICES Labor and Employment

Haynes Boone Counsel [Raquel Alvarenga](#) talked with *HR Magazine* about what employers need to know about the American Rescue Plan Act, which was signed into law to help struggling businesses and workers during the coronavirus pandemic.

Here is an excerpt:

Funds for Small Businesses and Restaurants

Raquel Alvarenga, an attorney with Haynes Boone in Dallas, expects that small-business grants, as well as increased funding and expanded eligibility for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), will allow more small businesses to keep their doors open and their workforces employed as the economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis continue.

"The American Rescue Plan Act provides a much-needed life raft to small businesses," she said.

FFCRA and Other Tax Credit Extensions

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) required employers with fewer than 500 employees to provide paid sick leave and paid family leave for certain COVID-19-related reasons through the end of 2020. FFCRA provided refundable tax credits to eligible employers to reimburse them for the paid leave wages.

Although employers are no longer required to offer such leave, Congress extended the tax credit in prior legislation for employers that voluntarily continued to offer covered leave through March 31. The American Rescue Plan Act extends the tax credit again through Sept. 30 and increases the maximum per-employee tax credit that employers can receive.

Alvarenga expects that these changes will further encourage small to midsize businesses to voluntarily provide paid leave to their employees for eligible COVID-19-related reasons.

To read the full article, click [here](#).