Jason Habinsky, Matt Deffebach in the Houston Chronicle: Office Space: How to Keep Texas Workers Safe as They Return

By Jason Habinsky, Matthew Thomas Deffebach | April 30, 2020

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The *Houston Chronicle* quoted Haynes Boone Partners Jason Habinsky and Matt Deffebach in an article about how companies should prepare for the return of employees to the workplace as early as Friday in Texas amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here is an excerpt:

Many companies have focused on separating employee workstations so workers remain 6 feet apart to comply with government social-distancing recommendations. They're also buying masks and gloves to prevent the virus from spreading. But what about not-so-obvious dilemmas, such as whether to station someone on each floor to help maintain distancing in office elevators. And what to do about the germ-covered door knobs on bathroom doors?

"It's the simple things, like unfortunately and sadly, maybe eliminate the handshake," Jason Habinsky, an employment lawyer with Haynes Boone, told employers this week during a telephone seminar. Instead, maybe workers could point and a nod at each other, a manner that before the Coronavirus pandemic might have been awkward but now makes sense.

Issues remain, however: How can employers do a safety screening without causing employees to bunch up at the entrance, or take their temperatures safely while respecting privacy, especially if a worker with a fever needs to be pulled aside.

"Don't rush into it without thinking it through," Matthew Deffebach, an employment lawyer with Haynes Boone told employers on the conference call.

To read the full article, click here. (Subscription required)

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