

# RISK Monitor

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A Newsletter for Clients and Friends of Galloway Chandler McKinney Insurance

## HUMAN RESOURCES

# To Avoid Sexual Harassers, Start with Hiring Process

BESIDES THE fallout from having sexual harassment occur in your workplace, employers may be targeted in “negligent hiring” charges if victims of on-the-job harassment file suit.

That’s why much of the conversation among human resources specialists and risk managers is avoiding hiring harassers, or potential harassers, in the first place.

But how do you identify a harasser during the hiring process? Dr. John Sullivan, an HR pundit from Silicon Valley, recommends the following methods for screening out potential offenders.

**Develop a set of indicators** – Identify traits of previous problem employees in the workplace, particularly their attitudes about certain subjects and workplace culture. Besides your own indicators,

you can learn from other companies and what they have found are signs that point to potential harassers.

### Toxic-employee indicators

- Professionals who are notably overconfident about their technical proficiencies are 43% more likely to engage in toxic behavior.
- Self-proclaimed “rule followers” are 33% more likely to be toxic employees.

Armed with this data, you can ask questions that will help you ascertain if a candidate is overconfident about their technical proficiency or claims they are a rule follower.



Source: Cornerstone OnDemand

**Employee referrals** – You should allow employees to refer candidates they have worked with in the past for open positions. Based on prior experience working with someone, your current employees will know what kind of person the prospect is in the workplace.

**Conduct peer interviews** – You may want to consider having finalist candidates be interviewed by their future colleagues, particularly the ones who will work closely with them. Those future colleagues probably have the most vested interest in identifying harassers, since they are likely the ones to be most affected if they turn out to be toxic.

You can help your employees by asking them to look for the

*See ‘Avoid’ on page 4*



## Welcome to the Galloway Chandler McKinney Insurance Newsletter!

It is with great satisfaction that we bring this newsletter to you. In this issue and in coming months, we will discuss pertinent risk management topics which may affect your organization. We sincerely hope that you will find this newsletter informative and please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or needs.

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# Working from Home? Expand Coverage as You Grow

AS THE GIG economy grows, more and more people are opting to work from home, either to supplement their income from a full- or part-time job, as a freelancer, or to pursue operating a small business.

Unfortunately, your homeowner's or renter's insurance may not cover damage to your business assets. Sixty percent of home-based businesses lack adequate business insurance, according to the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, based in Alexandria, Va.

If you are running a small business or working freelance from home, and if the loss of machinery, tools, data or IT equipment would seriously impair your ability to make money, you want to make sure you have the right coverage.

To safeguard your data, equipment and operations, you may want to follow these tips:

## Check your insurance

If you are running a home-based business or need more protection for business property that is in your home, you may want to consider purchasing additional coverage.

Depending on your needs, you may have a few different options for protecting your business property.

## Rider to a homeowner's or renter's policy

The most inexpensive home-based business insurance is an add-on or rider that expands a homeowner's or renter's policy to cover the company.

The cost of such a rider is minimal – often a few hundred dollars per year – but it generally provides about \$2,500 of additional coverage. This type of insurance may be appropriate

for a one-person business without a lot of valuable equipment or many business-related visitors, and unlikely to suffer a major loss if unable to operate for a while as a result of fire or other disaster.

## In-home business policy

An in-home policy covers a broader spectrum of contingencies, including loss of critical documents or theft of funds being taken to the bank for deposit. Such a business policy, issued by a home insurer or a specialty firm, usually is a plan against injury or theft covering as many as three employees.

You may be able to buy additional coverage to increase the protection your homeowner's insurance policy provides for business supplies. Some insurers may allow you to increase the limit up to \$10,000. Adding this coverage may help cover inventory, such as cosmetics or kitchen supplies, temporarily stored in your home as you're preparing to sell it or deliver it to customers.

## Business owner's policy

Entrepreneurs who need more than \$10,000 of coverage should pay for a business owner's policy. This comprehensive policy is the most common policy for small business and covers:

- Damage to or loss of business equipment and other assets
- Liability for customer injuries
- Loss of critical records
- Malpractice or professional liability claims, and
- Loss of income or a business interruption in the case of a power outage or a natural disaster.

Such a policy might also protect you when driving a personal vehicle for business purposes. ❖



# Preventing Heat Illness as Temperatures Soar

With temperatures rising, employers with outdoor workers need to take steps to protect them from heat illness.

While federal OSHA has not implemented a heat illness prevention standard, employers around the country can still look to California's thorough standard for guidance on protecting their workers.

Workers with existing health problems or medical conditions – such as diabetes – that reduce tolerance to heat, need to be extra vigilant. Some high blood pressure and anti-inflammatory medications can also increase a person's risk for heat illness.

California's heat illness prevention standard requires that employers ensure the following:

## Access to water

Staying hydrated is probably the single-most important step in heat-illness prevention.

Water must be “fresh, pure, suitably cool” and located as close as practicable to where employees are working (and enough to provide at least one quart per employee per hour for the entire shift).

Employers should encourage workers to stay hydrated and drink water.

## Access to shade

When temperatures reach 80 degrees, you must have and maintain one or more areas of shade at all times, when employees are present. Locate the shade as close as practical to the area where employees are working and provide enough to accommodate the number of employees on meal, recovery or rest periods.

Even if temperatures are less than 80 degrees, you must permit access to shade for workers to rest.

## Preventative cool-downs

If an employee starts feeling unwell, they must be allowed to take a “preventative cool-down rest,” during which they must be monitored for symptoms of heat illness.

They should be encouraged to remain in the shade and not ordered back to work until symptoms are gone. Employees with heat illness symptoms must be provided appropriate first aid or emergency response.

## High-heat procedures

High-heat procedures (which are triggered at 95 degrees) must include:

1. “Effective” observation and monitoring of employees, including a mandatory buddy system.
2. Regular communication with employees working by themselves.
3. Designating one or more employees to call for emergency services, if needed.
4. Giving more frequent reminders to drink plenty of water.
5. Holding pre-shift meetings on prevention.
6. During high heat, agricultural employees must be provided with a minimum 10-minute cool-down period every two hours.

*See 'Heat' on page 4*



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## Avoid Hiring Harassers in The First Place

above-mentioned indicators that you have developed.

**A new approach to calling references** – Instead of calling an HR department for references, try instead to call the candidate's former manager or co-workers. Dr. Sullivan recommends: "Ask them a direct question like, 'Please help me protect my employees. I need to know, have you seen any indication of sexual harassment or other toxic behaviors in this individual? All I need is a yes or no answer.'"

**Create social interactions** – Companies like Zappos and Southwest Airlines try to put top candidates in social situations that they can observe. Zappos, for example, sets up social events like coffee sessions and after-work activities. Instead of hiring managers watching them, they have other employees observe the candidates in more buttoned-down situations when their guards are down.

**Situational questions** – Ask questions like: "In a situation where you yourself were actually witnessing sexual

harassment, what would you do?"

Then you could look for things they didn't mention, like "reporting the incident." Situational questions can reveal a lot about a person's moral fiber.

**Use behavioral and personality tests** – Off-the-shelf behavioral and psychological tests aren't specifically designed to weed out harassers, but they can be indicators of how job candidates treat others since they look at civility, integrity, moral character and more.

### The final step – after hiring

Dr. Sullivan recommends that you continue to assess new employees in the months after they are hired and still on probation. You can better evaluate them during their probation, when it's easier to let someone go.

You can gauge them to see if they meet your behavior or value standards. ❖

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## Heat Illness Prevention Starts with Solid Training

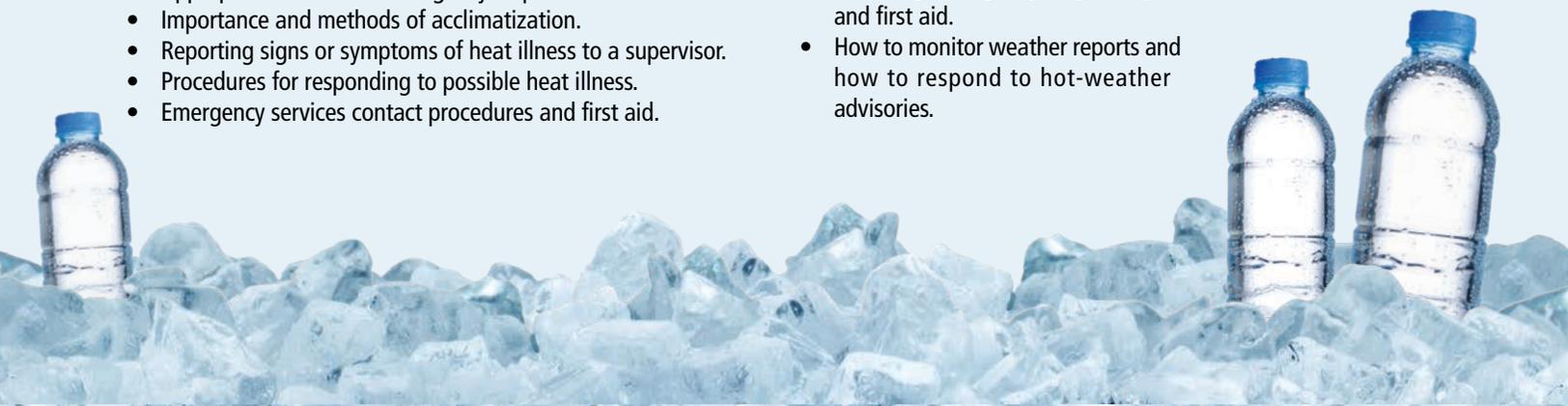
### Employee and supervisory training

#### Employees should be trained in the following:

- The company's heat illness prevention procedures.
- Their rights to take regular water and rest breaks.
- Importance of frequent consumption of small quantities of water.
- Signs and symptoms.
- Appropriate first aid or emergency response.
- Importance and methods of acclimatization.
- Reporting signs or symptoms of heat illness to a supervisor.
- Procedures for responding to possible heat illness.
- Emergency services contact procedures and first aid.

#### Supervisors must be trained on the following:

- The heat standard requirements.
- The procedures they must follow to implement the requirements.
- Procedures to follow when a worker exhibits or reports symptoms consistent with possible heat illness, including emergency response procedures and first aid.
- How to monitor weather reports and how to respond to hot-weather advisories.



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