2024 Employment Law Review: Key Shifts and Emerging Trends for 2025

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As we reflect on the past year in employment law, it is clear that both New Jersey and federal employment laws have seen significant shifts. In 2024, we witnessed major legal developments that impacted workers, employers, and the way businesses operate, both in New Jersey and across the country. In New Jersey, lawmakers continue to focus on strengthening protections for vulnerable workers. On the federal level, the U.S. Department of Labor has been active in enforcing worker misclassification rules, while the National Labor Relations Board has focused on minimizing noncompete agreements. Pregnant employees also found themselves at the center of significant legal changes this year, with the EEOC issuing new guidance interpreting the Pregnancy Discrimination Act to offer more robust protections and New York becoming the first State to require paid leave for prenatal care.

This year's Employment Law Year in Review summarizes these key developments in six important categories:

1. Independent Contractors & Domestic Workers,
2. Joint Employers,
3. Employee Protections,
4. Noncompete Agreements,
5. Pregnant Employees, and
6. Protecting the Workplace.

These categories highlight the trends and challenges that employers and employees will face as we move into the new year.

As we turn the page on 2024 and look forward to 2025, the employment law landscape in New Jersey and across the United States will almost certainly continue to evolve. On the federal level, the return of President Trump to office should significantly shift federal labor policies. We expect regulatory rollbacks. The Trump administration may move to limit the expansion of worker protections, reduce regulatory burdens on businesses, and reinstate policies favoring employers in disputes over workplace issues.

We also anticipate seeing the impact of AI having a significant impact on employment law, particularly in areas related to workforce automation, discrimination, and privacy. As AI takes over more routine tasks, there will be greater pressure to address job displacement, requiring lawmakers and businesses to find ways to balance technological advancement with workforce protection. Additionally, AI-powered systems will increasingly be used in hiring, performance evaluations, promotions, and workplace surveillance, prompting calls for more oversight to ensure fairness, privacy concerns, and transparency while continuing to avoid discriminatory practices.

In the pages that follow, our team has compiled detailed articles on each of these important areas, offering a deeper dive into the specific legal developments that have shaped 2024 and will continue to impact employers and employees in 2025. We hope this review provides valuable insights as you navigate the complex and dynamic world of employment law.