

2009 Essential Employment Law: A Practical Course in the Basics
September 10, 2009 • Four Seasons Hotel • Houston, TX
September 17, 2009 • Cityplace Conference Center • Dallas, TX
September 25, 2009 • Four Seasons Hotel • Austin, TX

Day 1 Morning

7:45 am In Houston Only	Registration Opens Includes continental breakfast.
8:20 am In Houston Only	Welcoming Remarks
In Houston Only	THE LAW: THE BASICS
8:30 am 0.75 hr	Texas is an "At-Will" State . . . So Why Worry? An overview of the legal aspects of the employment relationship and how tort law has been adapted in the workplace. Answering the client or the supervisor who thinks employment law begins and ends with "employment-at-will." What about terminating an employee for theft? Is there ever an obligation to give a reference on a former employee? How can a handshake get a manager sued for assault? What is intentional infliction of emotional distress? Can employee violence really be prevented? Is negligent retention really a cause of action? Connie L. Cornell, Cornell Smith & Mierl, LLP - Austin, TX Michael W. Fox, Ogletree Deakins - Austin, TX
9:15 am 1.00 hr	Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Understanding the difference between disparate treatment and disparate impact and why it matters. Why do you need to know about the "shifting burden of proof"? How can you prevent liability for harassment even after it occurs? Why is retaliation the most dangerous cause of action and what can you do about it?
10:15 am In Houston Only	Break
10:30 am 1.00 hr	Wage and Hour: An Old Law in a Modern World Learn the basics of wage and hour law and why violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act have exploded. Among the areas covered are who is exempt and who is not, and what difference it makes. What is working time, how is overtime calculated and what are the most common mistakes and how to avoid them.
11:30 am 0.50 hr	Family Medical Leave Act: The Other Major Entitlement Act The FMLA was the first federal act that required an employer to provide time off for employees. Learn the basics of the law which has recently been expanded and seems likely to expand further.

Day 1 Afternoon

12:00 pm In Houston Only	Lunch on your Own
In Houston Only	PRACTICAL APPLICATION
1:15 pm 1.00 hr	Hiring/Firing/Discipline/Documentation The basics of managing employees. Recognize the vulnerable points in the employment relationship and learn the best practices to make sure you minimize the number of problems and maximize your chances of successfully defending your actions when challenged.
2:15 pm 0.75 hr	Defensive Drafting: Handbooks & Forms Avoiding the most common mistakes in drafting employee handbooks and learn the latest in drafting policies that will enhance the employer's defenses. What other human resource forms can help support the company's defenses and prove good faith efforts to comply?
3:00 pm In Houston Only	Break
3:15 pm 0.75 hr	Investigating Sensitive Employment Complaints The investigation of an employee's complaint may be critical to an employer's only means of avoiding liability. The investigator may be a witness and the notes may be evidence. Learn how to investigate and document the process.
4:00 pm 0.75 hr	Annual Performance Reviews What are the pros and cons of evaluations systems? How do you avoid grade inflation? Are they really worth it? What are the alternatives?
4:45 pm In Houston Only	Adjourn