

Respected Attorney K. Todd Wallace is featured Guest Speaker at NOLA Society for Human Resource Management

Mr. Kenneth Todd Wallace led a presentation to local HR professionals on issues of discrimination based on an employee's physical appearance.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES, July 25, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Attorney [Kenneth Todd Wallace](#) served as the guest speaker at the New Orleans Louisiana (NOLA) Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) [Legal Perks](#) meeting on July 24, 2018. This [presentation](#) followed a similar discussion led by Mr. Wallace on May 22, 2018. Due to the interest generated by the important topics addressed by Mr. Wallace in May, he was asked to lead a second round-table discussion at this most recent meeting.



K. Todd Wallace, Attorney in New Orleans, Louisiana

Mr. Wallace led a presentation to local HR professionals on the latest developments and court decisions involving discrimination based on an employee's physical appearance. His discussion included potential liability under Title VII, the American with Disabilities Act, and relevant state laws.

Recent decisions regarding alleged discrimination based upon an employee's hairstyle, weight, clothes, jewelry, sexual orientation, and transgender status present significant issues for employers to consider. As Mr. Wallace explained, a number of recent court decisions have

potentially expanded an employer's liability in the workplace due to discrimination based on an employee's physical appearance. Employees and employers alike should understand the implications of this evolving area of the law.

“

... courts rarely interfered with an employer's business judgment to impose appearance ... standards ... However, such policies should not have a disparate impact on any particular protected class ...”

K. Todd Wallace, Attorney at Law

Mr. Wallace had this to say during his presentation to local labor, employment attorneys and HR professionals, “for years, the courts rarely interfered with an employer's business judgment to impose appearance and grooming standards unless the standard bore a clear and unequivocal relationship to a protected class. However, such policies should not have a disparate impact on any particular protected class regardless of the employer's

intention. Today, more and more courts have begun to expand Title VII liability in certain areas and, as a result, employers must stay on top of these developments.” He went on to add “employers should conduct training sessions with their human resource departments and supervisory personnel to ensure any workplace investigations, employment decisions and benefit offerings comply with Title VII protections as this area of the law evolves and potentially expands.”

Mr. Wallace also explained that most employers would agree that appearance is important. As a

result, courts have upheld an employer's legitimate business interest in employee appearance because first impressions, maintaining a certain corporate image, and the appearance's impact on the perception of certain characteristics, are important and legitimate considerations.

While Title VII prohibits discrimination based on certain protected classes including race, color, age, religion, national origin, or disability, there are no comprehensive federal laws preventing an employer from making an employment decision based on an employee's hairstyle, jewelry, facial hair, etc. However, an employer's insistence on an employee's "professional appearance" and "maintaining the right image" can be legitimate or nothing more than a means of cloaking intentional discrimination.

About NOLA SHRM

NOLA SHRM serves local affiliate of the Society for Human Resources Management, the world's largest HR professional society representing 285,000 members in more than 165 countries. With more than 530 local members, NOLA SHRM is the only Louisiana SHRM Chapter to reach Mega-level membership providing us a greater professional networking benefit. Through NOLA SHRM learning opportunities, its members are empowered to be the voice of the profession using sound and ethical practices on human resource management issues. Since 1962, NOLA SHRM has served as a resource for local human resources professionals and businesses providing a forum for personal and professional development on issues related to human resource management, promoting fellowship, and offering various networking experiences to keep our members engaged and current on industry trends.

Website of NOLA: <https://nola.shrm.org>

About the event with K. Todd Wallace: <https://nola.shrm.org/events/2018/07/legal-perk-july>

About K. Todd Wallace

Mr. Wallace received his Juris Doctor, cum laude, from Loyola University College of Law, New Orleans, LA. While at Loyola, he served as the Managing Editor of the Loyola Law Review, and as a member of the William C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Team. Before law school, he



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The image shows two screenshots from a web browser. The top screenshot is a page titled "You're Invited..." with the main heading "This month's Legal Perk topic: Discrimination Based on Physical Appearance Part II". It lists "Title VII, ADA, and other legal implications" and features a photo of Todd Wallace of Wallace Meyaski with a red stamp that says "BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!". The bottom screenshot is the NOLA SHRM website homepage, which includes a search bar, navigation menu, and a welcome message from Mr. K. Todd Wallace. The website identifies NOLA SHRM as an affiliate of the Society for Human Resource Management in New Orleans, LA.

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

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