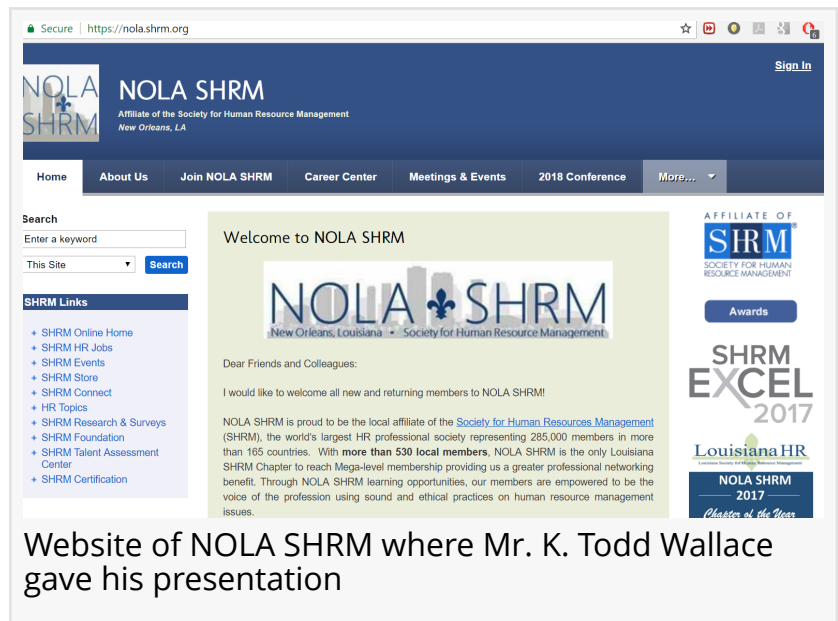


# Attorney K Todd Wallace is featured Guest Speaker at NOLA Society for Human Resource Management

*K. Todd Wallace led a presentation on the latest developments and court decisions involving discrimination based on an employee's physical appearance.*

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES, September 2, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New Orleans-based 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.



Website of NOLA SHRM where Mr. K. Todd Wallace gave his presentation

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.

“... employers should conduct training sessions ... to ensure any workplace investigations, employment decisions and benefit offerings comply with Title VII protections as this area of the law evolves”  
*K. Todd Wallace, Attorney in New Orleans*

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.

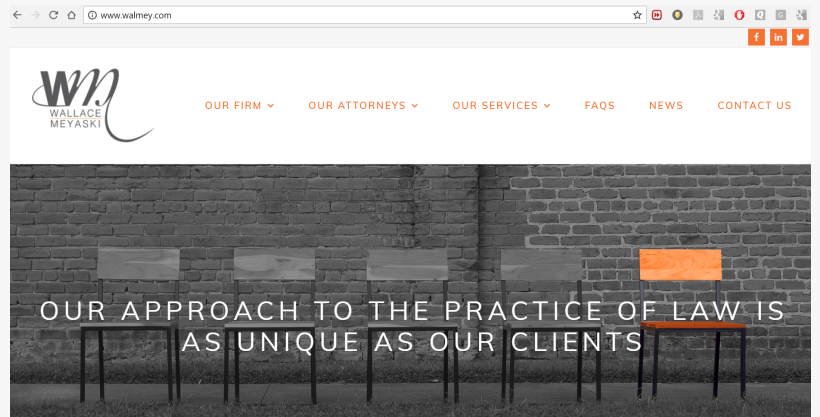
While Title VII prohibits discrimination based on certain protected classes including race, color, age, religion, national origin, or disability, there are no comprehensive federal laws preventing an employer from making an employment decision based on an employee’s hairstyle, jewelry, facial hair, etc. 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.

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.

About [K. Todd Wallace](#)



K. Todd Wallace, Attorney in New Orleans, Louisiana



Website of Law Firm Wallace Meyaski, K. Todd Wallace



Attorney Kenneth Todd Wallace in New Orleans

Kenneth Todd Wallace is an attorney and founding partner of the law firm Wallace Meyaski LLC. He has nearly 20 years of experience in the legal and business professions with established excellence in trial advocacy, negotiation, strategic and initiative planning, employment law compliance, government relations, mergers and acquisitions, and team building. He 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 received his Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

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**This month's Legal Perk topic:**

**Discrimination Based on Physical Appearance**

**Part II**

**Title VII, ADA, and other legal implications**

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Website of NOLA: <https://nola.shrm.org>  
About the event: <https://nola.shrm.org/events/2018/07/legal-perk-july>

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