

## Labor Law For Food Operations: Expert Q & A

News

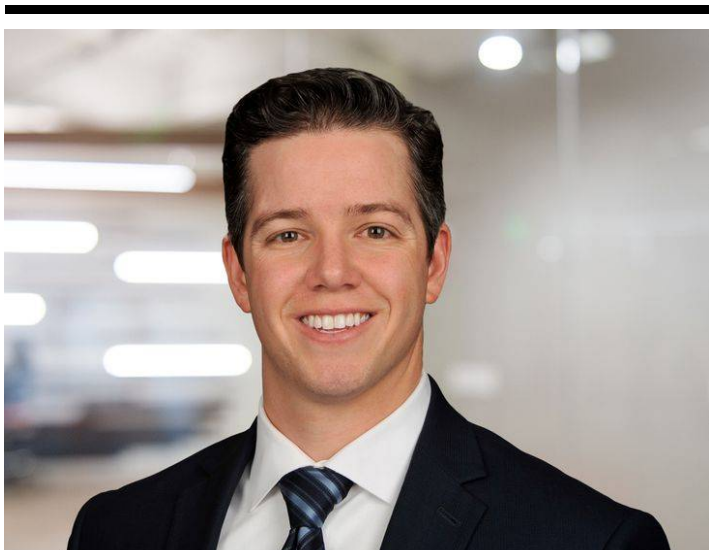
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Irvine attorney Tyler Rasmussen was interviewed by *Food Engineering Magazine* for the column “Labor Law For Food Operations: Expert Q & A.” One of the topics addressed was the issues associated with employee use of social media. Tyler said: “We’ve really seen an explosion of this, not only with employees being on Facebook and Twitter but companies themselves having Facebook and Twitter accounts and having the employees run them. The most important thing here is to establish the policies and guidelines at the onset, in your employee handbook or a standalone policy, laying out the company’s rules and regulations regarding Internet usage.” He noted that there are two separate issues at hand. One is when the employee is using Facebook or Twitter during working hours. The employer has the ability to limit employees’ access to social media in the workplace. The other issue is when an employee is acting as a representative of the company on social media and acts maliciously and hurts the company. “If an employee says on social media, ‘I’m an employee of X Company, and we hate all our clients,’ you may have a cause of action against the employee for that. It’ll be dealt with on a situation to situation basis, and you have to make sure you balance that employee’s first amendment rights especially if the incident was outside work hours. But the company has to be aware that it does have some protections, and it has to be careful when enforcing the law on them.”

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