

REWARDS RUNDOWN

2026 | Q2

A Great Start to the Year!

We're pleased to share that our first meeting of the year was a tremendous success. Members reconnected, new faces joined the conversation, and the discussions were both engaging and forward-looking.



UPCOMING INSIGHTS TO EXPLORE



Whether you hold an HR certification or simply want to stay current on key total rewards topics, we've put together a list of live WorldatWork webinars to help you stay informed.

Each session offers 1 credit toward WorldatWork, SHRM, and HRCI.

4/14 (LIVE) Leveraging Centers of Excellence to Manage High Health Costs of Cancer

5/12 (LIVE) AI in the Real World: What People Are Actually Doing and Why It Matters

4/28 (LIVE) Beyond Performance: How "Impact" Drives Compensation Resource Allocation

5/19 (LIVE) From Curiosity to Confidence: Putting Real-World HR AI Use Cases into Practice

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



John C. Hughes
ERISA Attorney
Partner at Miller Nash LLP

Share your role and what you focus on as an ERISA attorney.

I am a partner at Miller Nash LLP. I've been practicing exclusively and continuously in the ERISA/employee benefits field for the last 25 years. My practice generally entails working with employers of all kinds (that is, companies, nonprofits, and government entities) assisting them with ongoing compliance efforts relative to the complex web of laws, regulations, etc. governing their retirement, medical, and deferred compensation plans. My approach is very pragmatic and efficient. I also solve/fix problems when they arise (which is inevitable, and employers should not wait to involve me until that happens). I am also am frequently involved in the benefits portion of M&A activity, as well as the establishment of new plans and termination of plans.

What are the most common compliance mistakes with employer benefit plans?

The most common problem are "qualification failures" relative to qualified retirement plans (that is, 401(k), profit sharing, and defined benefit/pension plans). Most qualification failures involve not following the plan terms. For example, and this happens a lot, an employee makes an election to defer a certain amount of their pay (or there is automatic enrollment or escalation), and inadvertently due to administrative missteps that election or plan term is not honored. There are several ways to address that particular issue under IRS guidance. Another frequent qualification failure relates to not updating a plan document in a timely fashion or making a mistake in an amendment or restatement. It also seems some employers fail to maintain older plan documents and amendments. Most plans must be amended by the end of this year in response to the series of laws referred to as "SECURE 2.0." SECURE 2.0 contains many mandatory provisions, and many optional provisions. Putting the SECURE 2.0 amendment in place will require focus and attention; there is nothing pro forma about it.

How can employers know when its time to involve legal counsel?

It really should be an ongoing dialogue. The clients I get questions from every week, I know are in good shape, and if something comes up, we handle it promptly. When I am not hearing from clients, I know something is going to go wrong, and it will cost more in legal fees (and other correction related costs) and be more burdensome to the client to resolve. The "head in the sand" approach will not save money or avoid worse headaches.



EVENTS



May 12, 2026

Elissa O'Brien

VP of Membership | World at Work

Dynamic Rewards - Meeting the Challenge

Elissa will be exploring how evolving labor market trends are shaping employee expectations and total rewards strategies. She will also cover how to align and optimize rewards programs to improve employee experience, productivity, and retention.

SAVE THE DATE



▶ July 14, 2026

8:30am - 10:30am

Lisa Donnellon & Candy Eiler - HUB

"Creative Plan Design & Financial Wellness"

▶ September 8, 2026

8:30am - 10:00am

Muriel Taing - Mercer

"Skills Based Pay"

▶ November 10, 2026

8:30am - 10:00am

[Virtual Meeting]

Details Coming Soon.

We have a job board!

If you want more visibility on an open position at your organization, we can get it posted on SICBA.net.

Email us today!



www.sicba.net



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Association