



M&G | exposure

"As a long time employee of seventeen years, I have been fortunate in Morris & Garritano allowing me the opportunity to try different roles within our commercial lines department. This company and its people have given me the chance to grow and the encouragement to discover what I love most; teaching others. Now, I am able to help coworkers learn to love what they do and pass on the knowledge others have given me to do what's in the best interest of our clients."

- Julia Dorst, Training and Development Coordinator

MESSAGE FROM THE COO: FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Contributed by: Kerry Morris, Chief Operating Officer

Generally, when someone is searching for a new job, they aren't just looking for somewhere to work, they are looking for somewhere they would be happy to work. When a new employee finds the right fit with a company they are able to discover their talents, connect to new people, build on their expertise, grow with their community and even leave their legacy.

Employers often ask, "What makes a good applicant?" At Morris & Garritano, there are three key elements that we find make a candidate a good fit: a positive attitude, an inquisitive mind, and being solution oriented. These attributes align with our culture and our vision, helping to create an environment that fosters collaboration and continued growth for our company and our employees.

Positive Attitude: We know that starting a new job can be intimidating and oftentimes, overwhelming. Finding an employee who acknowledges those facts, but still has the drive to come to work with a smile and tackle their new role head-on – that is someone that we want on our team. A positive attitude is contagious, therefore making that a focus in our hiring process is beneficial to the entire company.

Inquisitive Mind: When seeking new candidates for our office, we gravitate to those who show a passion. It doesn't even have to be a passion for insurance – we can teach insurance, but we can't teach the desire to learn. We want people who ask questions and seek out answers. Those who challenge themselves to learn more and improve every day.

Solution Oriented: We look for people who will be active participants in our office and focus on providing solutions for our clients. Insurance can oftentimes be frustrating or seem confusing, so it is our job to help our clients navigate through it all by analyzing an issue, thinking through a process, and producing an idea. At the end of the day, improving the customer experience is our ultimate goal.

Whether you are in the hospitality industry, construction, agriculture, or running your own business, it takes a special blend of talent to bring the best service to your customers. Each employee is essential. Investing the time to handpick your future employees can help ensure that your unique culture will remain a constant in all aspects of your product or service.

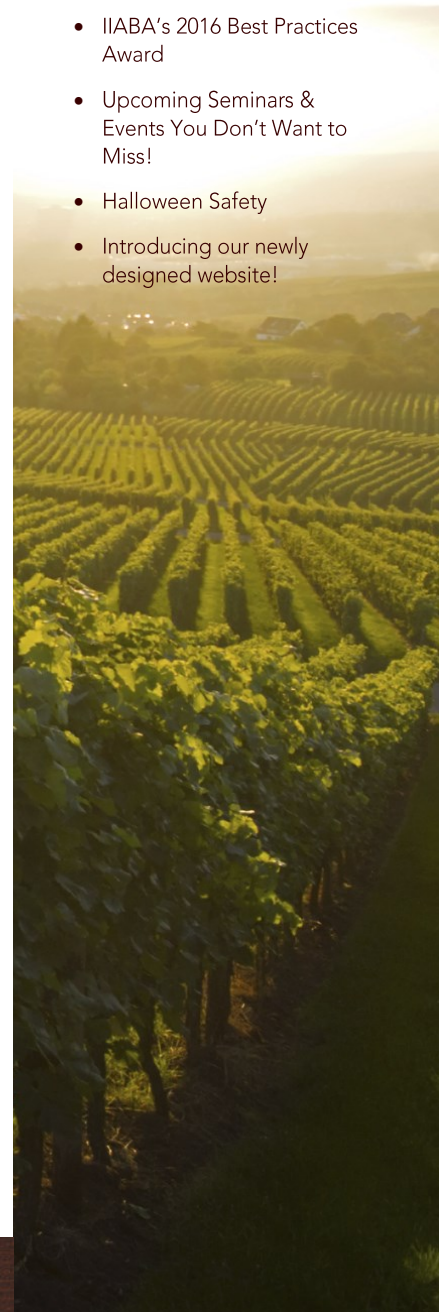


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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- IIABA's 2016 Best Practices Award
- Upcoming Seminars & Events You Don't Want to Miss!
- Halloween Safety
- Introducing our newly designed website!



REPORTING WAGE VIOLATIONS ON-LINE

Contributed by: Louise Matheny, Human Resources Consultant

On August 31st, the California Labor Commissioner launched a new on-line reporting system for labor law violations. The system allows anyone to report a business' alleged violation in real time so that the Bureau of Field Enforcement can investigate the allegations and take action if necessary.

The report asks numerous questions pertaining to the accused's business, its employees, the standard work schedule, how and when employees are paid, along with various other factors. The types of suspected violations that can be reported include, but are not limited to:

- Minimum wage violations
- Failure to maintain workers' compensation insurance
- Overtime violations
- Recordkeeping violations
- Licensing/registration violations

Those reporting a violation must provide their name and contact information, but are given the option for it to remain confidential within the investigation.

The new on-line system will make it easier for current and former employees to report perceived violations, so it is in the best interests of employers to routinely audit their wage and hour practices to ensure they are in compliance with all of California's wage and hour laws.

Please contact Louise Matheny, our Human Resources Consultant, with questions pertaining to these articles or any other HR inquiries.

CURRENT FORM I-9 VALID UNTIL JANUARY 21, 2017

Contributed by: Louise Matheny, Human Resources Consultant

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced that the newest version of the Form I-9 will be made available by November 22, 2016. The current form, with a revision date of 03/08/2013 may still be used until January 21, 2017.

The revisions to the new form are intended to help reduce technical errors for which an employer could be fined. Some improvements include:

- Form field validation
- Drop-down lists and calendars
- Embedded instructions
- Print, Clear and Start Over buttons

While the new form will be updated with these features, it is important to note that it is not an electronic I-9, as defined in the regulations. Forms will still need to be printed with a handwritten signature. The information can then be retyped into E-Verify as required.



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

FARMWORKER OVERTIME BILL SIGNED INTO LAW

Contributed by: Louise Matheny, Human Resources Consultant

Assembly Bill 1066, signed by Governor Brown on September 12, will grant agricultural workers in California the same right to overtime pay as those working in other industries. While the United Farm Workers union views it as a major victory, others worry that it will result in a setback for the industry and the farmworkers' interests.

Currently, farmworkers receive overtime pay if they work more than 10 hours in a day or 60 hours in a week. Incrementally over the course of four years, AB 1066 will raise the overtime wages to time-and-a-half pay for more than 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week, matching what other California employees currently receive. Smaller farms, those with 25 or fewer employees, will have more time to comply.

This bill has been a point of contention from the start with supporters treating it as a step toward equal treatment for a largely low-paid and historically marginalized workforce, while the opposition fears that employers will reduce worker hours in an attempt to avoid triggering overtime requirements.

At What Point an Employee Will Receive Time-and-a-Half Pay

2019 (2022 for smaller farms)	>9 ½ hours/day or 55 hours/week
2020 (2022 for smaller farms)	>9 hours/day or 50 hours/week
2021 (2024 for smaller farms)	>8 ½ hours/day or 45 hours/week
2022 (2025 for smaller farms)	>8 hours/day or 40 hours/week

***2022 (2025 for smaller farms)** – working more than 12 hours a day would require double pay

WHISTLEBLOWER CLAIMS IN THE WEST

Contributed by: Louise Matheny, Human Resources Consultant

Under federal and state law, employees who “blow the whistle” and report a company violation are protected from retaliation. Under a new pilot program, launched in the Western region* of the U.S. by the Department of Labor (DOL), the investigation of complaints and potential retaliation will now move forward more quickly.

There are 22 statutes that the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is responsible for monitoring in the case of a whistleblower claim. These statutes include workplace safety statutes as well as financial reform and securities law, the Affordable Care Act, environmental protections, and more.

The new pilot process will allow the findings of an OSHA investigation to be released to the DOL's administrative law judges for determination. Remedies could include back pay, compensatory damages, punitive damages where authorized, attorneys' fees and reinstatement. The ultimate goal is to expedite resolutions for whistleblowers and their employers. Employers should be mindful that whistleblower and retaliation claims are on the rise and that more of them will be expedited through the DOL's administrative law judges.

*Western region includes California, American Samoa, Arizona, Guam, Hawaii, Nevada and the Northern Mariana Islands

Upcoming Seminars You Don't Want to Miss!

HRCC 2016 Annual Conference: A Path to Profits, Passion and Purpose

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

7:30am – 12:00pm

Alex Madonna Expo Center

100 Madonna Road

San Luis Obispo, CA

Learn about employee happiness, engagement and motivation from Sunny Grosso, a happiness consultant, a thought leader in the culture movement and a culture expert for Zappos.

[Click here](#) for more information or visit http://hrcentralcoast.org/annual_conference.php to register by October 7th.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ON THE OPEN ROAD

Contributed by: Sheri Bruner, Commercial Lines Service Manager

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are more than 240 million registered motor vehicles in the United States, and an estimated one-fourth of those are used for business in some way. If your company is one who routinely has employees driving work vehicles, it is important to have a strong fleet management program in place to help better protect your business and your drivers.

Review driving records and create an approved-driver list: All employees that use a business vehicle should be cleared to drive by a superior or manager. While the criteria may vary by business type or driver responsibility, the process should always include reviewing the driver's motor vehicle record (MVR). Having an approved-driver list will help you avoid sending drivers out who may not have a valid driver's license or enough insurance coverage.

Personal vehicles for business use: Your fleet program should apply to all vehicles used for company business, even personal ones. If employees are allowed to use their personal vehicles for business use, it is important that they have a current driver's license, carry adequate personal auto insurance, and accept the responsibility to keep the vehicle well maintained. Be sure to communicate these guidelines to your employees in a clear and timely manner.

Make the company policy clear: Although it is common to have policies against the use of intoxicating substances or mobile devices while driving, reminding employees of all of your company policies is an effective way to mitigate risk.

Establish protocols in the event of a crash or accident: Ensure your drivers know what to do when and if an accident occurs. Do they need to contact someone at your company first or report it directly to the insurance company? What information should they provide and gather at the accident scene? Is there any follow-up reporting or documentation that needs to occur?

Just like driving your own vehicle, there are unknown risks when an employee takes to the road. While driver training is important, establishing a fleet management program that addresses proper behavior and expectations is helpful in protecting your vehicles, your business, and your employees.



MEDICAL PROVIDER NETWORKS: CARING FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES

Contributed by: Mary Jean Collins, Workers' Compensation Claims Analyst

What is an MPN?

A Medical Provider Network (MPN) is a group of health care providers, both physicians and other varied medical providers, contracted by your insurance carrier. MPNs must allow your employees to have a choice of provider(s) for their healthcare needs. Each MPN must include a mix of doctors specializing in work-related injuries and doctors with expertise in general areas of medicine.

Do I have to send my employee to an MPN provider for a work related injury?

Unless your employee pre-designates a physician prior to a work related injury, employers must refer an employee to the contracted medical provider.

This is beneficial to you, as established MPNs have a negotiated fee schedule which oftentimes saves employers money on medical costs. Beyond the cost savings, using an established MPN allows the employer and insurance carrier to maintain control of the claim.

We recommend for the initial first medical assessment, you use an MPN Urgent Care Provider.

How do I locate which providers are in our MPN?

Your WC poster should list the MPN Administrator's phone number and web site to access providers for all specialties.

IIABA'S 2016 BEST PRACTICES AWARD

Contributed by: Sara Holloway, Marketing Coordinator

We are excited to announce that Morris & Garritano has been awarded the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America's (IIABA) 2016 Best Practices Status.

Out of more than 1,800 nominees, we are one of 254 independent agencies throughout the United States to receive this honor. The Best Practices Study, initiated by the IIABA in 1993, is a means to improve insurance agency quality by defining industry standards. An agency must qualify based on outstanding customer retention, growth, stability and financial management.

With over 300,000 business owners and employees making up the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, we are proud to know that Morris & Garritano can be thought of as an ideal example of what a high performance agency can achieve in serving clients.



WHAT A PAIN IN THE BACK!

Contributed by: Michael Schedler, Loss Control Consultant

We've all heard it before, "Lift with your legs, not with your back!" Yet according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), one out of every five injuries and illnesses in the workplace are due to back injuries, with 80% of those occurring to the lower back. So how do we keep from hurting ourselves?

ONE – Know how your back functions

Your vertebrae, disks and muscles all work together to provide you with support, flexibility and protection of the spinal cord and nerves. There are five common factors that negatively affect one of the above elements and lead to back pain or injury:

1. Poor posture
2. Poor physical condition
3. Improper body mechanics
4. Incorrect lifting
5. Jobs that require high energy

TWO – Maintain a neutral posture

Your body will find its natural balance when you are in a neutral posture. Being aware of how you feel during rest and movement can help determine what that means for your body. Pay close attention to how you sit and stand and be sure to stretch and shift positions often.

THREE – Handle objects carefully

- Avoid lifting items that are more than 1/3 -1/2 your body weight – get someone to help.
- If you can, slide an object rather than lifting it. Pushing is better than pulling.
- If an object is located above your shoulders, use a ladder or stepstool.
- Use a hand cart or dolly when needed.
- Clear your intended pathway before moving an object.
- Lift with common sense – plant feet firmly, bend at the knees, get a good grip and lift steadily and smoothly.

Plan your movements so that you can perform your job and avoid injury. It all comes down to making good decisions that fit with your body's abilities.

MEDICARE PART D: NOTICES TO CMS AND INDIVIDUALS

Contributed by: Keith Dunlop, Compliance Advisor

DISCLOSURE TO CMS

Employers with health plans that provide prescription drug coverage to individuals who are eligible for Medicare Part D are subject to certain disclosure requirements. One of these requirements provides that plan sponsors must disclose to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on an annual basis and at other select times, whether the plan's prescription drug coverage is creditable or non-creditable.

This disclosure is required regardless of whether the health plan's coverage is primary or secondary to Medicare. Plan sponsors are required to use the online form on the CMS Creditable Coverage [web page](#) to make this disclosure.

The plan sponsor must complete the online disclosure within 60 days after the beginning of the plan year. For calendar year health plans, the deadline for the annual online disclosure is **March 1** (Feb. 29 for leap years).

DISCLOSURE TO INDIVIDUALS

In addition to the annual disclosure to CMS, group health plan sponsors must disclose to individuals who are eligible for Medicare Part D whether the plan's prescription drug coverage is creditable. At a minimum, creditable coverage disclosure notices must be provided to individuals at the following times:

- Prior to the Medicare Part D annual coordinated election period – beginning **Oct 15** through Dec 7 each year
- Prior to an individual's initial enrollment for Part D
- Prior to the effective date of coverage for any Medicare-eligible individual who joins the plan
- Whenever prescription drug coverage ends or changes so that it is no longer creditable or becomes creditable
- Upon a beneficiary's request

If the creditable coverage disclosure notice is provided to all plan participants annually, before **October 15** of each year, items (1) and (2) above will be satisfied. CMS has provided model disclosure notices for plan sponsors to use when disclosing their creditable coverage status to Medicare beneficiaries. The model disclosure notices are available on CMS' [website](#).

Contact Morris & Garritano Director of Compliance, Keith Dunlop, for further information regarding these or any other ACA-related issues.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND ME (EVEN IF I DON'T HAVE ONE)

Contributed by: Dave Morgan, Senior Employee Benefits Advisor

The billions of dollars brought up in any discussion about national health care costs makes it numbing. However, most of us can feel a financial pinch, if not significant pain. U.S. health spending is projected to be north of \$10,000 per person this year. Even if that isn't our personal burden, we are helping bear it for others in some way.

With such overwhelming costs, where best to start with a solution? The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) attributes 86% of our national bill to treatment of chronic conditions. Following are some of the most common:

- **Heart disease** Including complications with the blood vessel system, increased likelihood of a heart attack or other chronic diseases
- **Type 2 diabetes** Our most common type of diabetes, it brings higher monthly medical costs and increased risk of other conditions, e.g. gum disease, glaucoma, and kidney disease
- **Obesity** Defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater, it can impact workplace productivity and lead to diabetes and heart disease.

As with other chronic conditions, there is a fairly common theme of interrelatedness. Thankfully, there is another theme: prevention. Though genetics has a role, lifestyle choices—avoiding tobacco, exercising regularly, eating well, and managing stress—have great preventive potential. It's important to know your starting point and track your progress. ACA's influence on preventive care lowers the financial barrier for receiving regular key measurements, such as blood pressure and cholesterol. As chronic conditions can last a lifetime, so must preventive efforts.

THE HOUR THAT KEEPS GIVING

Contributed by: Dave Morgan, Senior Employee Benefits Advisor

Employers are well aware of their investment in employee benefits insurance, especially since it grows annually. They continue to contribute for a variety of reasons:

Traditional: fueling recruitment and retention

Personal: protecting others after a family medical challenge

Compliance: sponsoring a plan in lieu of donation to the IRS

However, employers may be less aware of in-person open enrollment education as an employee benefit. A very powerful hour, wherein much is accomplished:

- **Compliance:** Employees understanding how the affordability of group coverage disqualifies their families from Covered California subsidies but not Medi-Cal can be valuable for all involved.
- **Morale ROI:** Hearing about the generosity of a program from someone outside the company bolsters any internal discussions.
- **Financial Wellness:** Repeated education on how health plans work helps employees make prudent selections and to use their plans safely throughout the year, staying in network and optimizing care.
- **Support:** Open enrollment meetings are really opening ceremonies where employees are reminded of their team of advocates at Morris & Garritano, who can help with everything from concierge items to critical case management.
- **Prevention:** From immunizations to colonoscopies, many services are included in health plans. However, without coaching, there can be surprise bills and avoidance by certain demographics. Additionally, highlighting the preventive benefits in vision plans can lead to early-notice of some significant conditions.

While an hour for open enrollment education may not be completely free — from paying wages to lost productivity — the cost as a percentage of investment in the program is minimal. The potential for gain, whether in appreciation or impact on health and/or finances, magnifies the hour's importance.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Contributed by: Marie Bloomstine, Personal Lines Department Manager



With Halloween just around the corner, homeowners are starting to spread the spooky spirit with decorations inside and outside of their homes. While you may want to give people a fright, it's important to be aware of any potential risks that could escalate the holiday to a real nightmare.

Check the perimeter of your home: Clear away debris or any other potential tripping hazards from your front yard or walkway. If you can, walk around your property the night before Halloween to identify any potential dangers that could be difficult to see in the dark.

Place decorations carefully: Follow manufacturer's instructions if assembling any decorations and make sure all items are securely fastened and away from any kind of open flame.

Be cautious with lighting: When plugging in lights or animated objects, do not overload the electrical outlets or link extension cords. Do not drape fabrics over light bulbs, as this could start a fire.

From trick-or-treating to costume parties, there is a lot of fun to be had during Halloween. Taking the time and care to protect your home will ensure that your family, your guests, and your neighbors will all have a safe holiday.

THE NEW MORRISGARRITANO.COM!

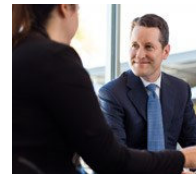
At the beginning of September, we launched the new version of our website. It was our goal to create a site that will better serve the needs of you, our client. When we started this adventure, there were some key elements that we wanted to focus on:

- Create a user-friendly, intuitive and modern website
- Accurately and efficiently describe our capabilities and services
- Introduce our clients to our amazing team of employees

We know that to remain your trusted advisor, we must continue to build on our history, experience and reputation. We aim to always be improving ourselves and the delivery of our services and are so excited to bring this new experience to you. Please take some time to explore our new website and click through our different departments and services.

We hope you find the site to be informative and refreshing and that it provides some insight into the passion and care that Morris & Garritano puts into serving your insurance needs every day. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to our office or to your account manager directly.

www.MorrisGarritano.com



MORRIS & GARRITANO INSURANCE

With a tradition of excellence in insurance services since 1885, we offer all lines of business and personal coverage with a staff of over 100 professionals.

Our monthly newsletter is where you can find informative articles relating to the Commercial Lines and Employee Benefits industries.

For day-to-day updates and more information about our community and our company, follow us on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.

Visit our website, or check us out on Yelp!

Please contact us for more information or questions on anything mentioned in this newsletter.



1122 Laurel Lane
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Phone: 805-543-6887

Fax: 805-543-3064

E-mail:
info@morrisgarritano.com

