



### **Best Practices to Help Avoid Charges of Pregnancy Discrimination**

With a growing number of laws on the books, there is no foolproof way to circumvent legal trouble. But here are some guidelines which may help you steer clear of some pitfalls when it comes to pregnancy discrimination.

- ✓ Provide training to managers about the relevant laws and your obligations.
- ✓ Don't engage in stereotypes or assumptions about gender roles or the division of domestic responsibilities. For example, don't assume that female employees with children will not be as committed to their jobs as other employees.
- ✓ Don't ask questions about an applicant's or employee's children, plans to start a family, pregnancy, or other caregiving issues during interviews or performance reviews.
- ✓ Focus on qualifications and accomplishments.
- ✓ Don't retaliate against individuals who report discrimination or harassment or provide information related to such complaints.
- ✓ If your organization needs to take action against a member of a protected group, such as pregnant women, make sure you maintain a documentation trail. Support your version of the events through written records including performance reviews, sales reports, attendance records, and personnel files. Print out relevant e-mail messages that indicate your concerns or actions were justified. Make sure all relevant records are preserved -- especially those stored electronically. Ensure the accuracy of statements is verified by other employees who do not have a vested interest in the outcome.
- ✓ If you have questions about your procedures or employees at your organization, consult with your attorney or HR adviser.