

The Legal Review

Sharing Case Law that Affects the Household Employment Industry

A Complimentary Resource from
Breedlove & Associates

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In an effort to help you strengthen your business practices and steer clear of legal trouble, *The Legal Review* will share findings from relevant legal cases. We've found that the easiest way to gain a practical understanding of complex tax and labor law is by reviewing real-life situations. These stories will illuminate potential legal landmines for your agency and/or your clients, and more importantly, show you how to avoid them.

Knowledge Is Power

Staying Current on Industry Issues & Best Practices: A Secret to Success

Having just returned from the International Nanny Association (INA) conference in Orlando, we thought it would be appropriate to turn our May issue of *The Legal Review* into *The Conference Review*. Instead of sharing a legal case, we'd like to share the latest news and hottest topics being discussed and debated at the INA Conference.

This is not intended to be a substitute for attending conferences. In fact, we strongly encourage agency leaders to attend and actively participate in industry conferences as regularly as possible. In the in-home childcare industry, most companies are small businesses functioning somewhat in isolation: most of us have limited contact with partners, mentors, affiliates, support services, etc.; most of us have limited access to best practices, research, trends and technologies; and, finally, most of us have limited time to climb above the issues of today and consider the opportunities of tomorrow.

One of the best ways to overcome these isolation obstacles and gain a tremendous competitive advantage is to participate in conferences offered by the organizations that support our industry.

At this year's INA Conference, there were more than 24 topics presented for agencies and nannies – far too many to properly summarize in this newsletter. However, here's a brief synopsis of a few topics that generated discussion and ideas throughout the conference:

Helping new agencies achieve success. Industry leaders helped new agencies set themselves up for success in today's marketplace. Topics included financial considerations, marketing, recruiting, competition, and proven business practices. The level of quality and success of new agencies is paramount to the success of the industry.

Keeping your business website relevant and up to date. The importance of a current and relevant website was discussed in detail. Without a current and useful website, agencies may very well be losing clients.

Using coaching skills to communicate with results. Maximizing communication skills improves business. Agencies learned how to build better rapport; how to retain clients and nannies; how to turn a non-client into a client; how to maximize referrals; and how to increase sales.

Using guerilla PR successfully. Successful PR is something that is often missing in our industry. Simple tools and proven methods to produce results with minimal cost were discussed: free media, print radio, public relations, and branding strategies.

Thriving in the face of online nanny services. There are advantages and disadvantages for both the full-service agency as well as the online service. Leveraging the strengths of the full-service agency was discussed, along with ways to build a better website.

Ensuring success at the time of placement as well as months down the road. Industry research conducted by Breedlove & Associates revealed that most families sing their agency's praises at the time of placement. However, several months later, many families change their tune when they learn about tax and legal obligations. Those that are blindsided by very expensive problems become irate at best and litigious at worst. Even families that have not yet encountered a problem are frustrated because they have to decide between three less-than-ideal options: 1) ignore the law and live in fear; 2) comply going forward and live in fear of the past; 3) comply retroactively and bite the bullet on back taxes, penalties and interest. Families revealed their strong desire to know this information at time of placement so they can budget correctly and prevent all the added expense and stress. The presentation also provided solutions on how to easily and quickly address this topic so they can better protect their families, their nannies and their agency.

Being "in the know" on industry topics such as these – and forcing ourselves to take a break from the day-to-day grind and think on a higher level – helps us grow and prosper in our ever-changing industry. Continuing education coupled with a little forward thinking is a tried-and-true formula for success. It's fun and prudent to hit the REFRESH button every once in a while!

In addition to being good for us as individual companies, it's good for the industry as a whole. The industry is only as strong as its individual members are willing to make it. Each of us has knowledge, experiences, skills, opinions and ideas which give the industry its collective strength and play a critical role in shaping its future. Repeat the personal accountability mantra three times: "If It Is To Be, It Is Up To Me."

We encourage you to improve your agency and your industry by becoming an INA member and attending next year's conference. It's a very small investment with huge potential dividends. For more information about the benefits of membership, visit www.nanny.org/membershipbenefits.php.

Next month, we'll turn our attention once again to sharing a legal case that will hopefully help you prevent problems for your families and/or your agency.

If you have additional questions, please call 888-BREEDLOVE (273-3356) or visit www.breedlove-online.com. We're here to help our agency partners provide their candidates and clients with information, tools and resources that improve the employment relationship, eliminate legal risk for all parties, and increase the professionalism of the industry.

Our latest tool is an HTML email that you can simply forward along to your families. It's a very quick synopsis of household employment tax and labor law and includes links to our paycheck calculator, information on tax breaks, and our website for more information. Combined with a verbal mention of tax obligations and encouragement to read this important email, you'll never have to worry about one of your families being blindsided by tax and legal problems. To request a copy of this email, simply email us at info@breedlove-online.com or give us a call.

