Virginia Employers, Are You Ready? New Employment Laws Go Into Effect July 1, 2020

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As we previously reported, this spring Virginia Governor Ralph Northam signed into law a number of new measures expanding protections for employees in the Commonwealth and providing enhanced mechanisms by which employees may bring claims against their employers for violations of those protections. Many of these new laws become effective on ***July 1, 2020***. As set forth in more detail here, among other things, these new laws:

- Amend Virginia's anti-discrimination law to expand its protections (including new prohibitions on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and veterans status), and the remedies available under the law. The amendments also greatly expand the law's applicability to far more employers and employees.
- Create a private right of action for workers who claim to have been misclassified as independent contractors.
- Create a private right of action for failure to pay wages and for employees to otherwise enforce protections provided under the Virginia Wage Payment Act ("VWPA").
- Prohibit non-compete agreements with low-wage workers.

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In anticipation of these measures becoming effective on July 1, 2020, Virginia employers should review with counsel their employment, compensation, and non-compete practices, and re-examine their independent contractor relationships to ensure they will be in compliance with the new laws.

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