AGENDA

Employment Law Conference
October 29-30, 2026

DAY 1

Time	Session	Abstract	Speaker
7:45 am - 8:45 am	**Registration and Check-in, Breakfast**		
9:00 am - 10:00 am	**Beyond the Algorithm: The HR/People Skills That Can't Be Replaced by Artificial Intelligence** Ogletree Deakins	As AI increasingly automates routine HR tasks, the value of HR professionals lies in the human skills technology cannot replicate. This session explores the critical role of emotional intelligence, trust-building, mentorship, and curiosity in creating psychologically safe workplaces and developing talent. Attendees will learn how to strengthen their strategic influence by focusing on meaningful human connections, positioning themselves as indispensable partners in the modern organization.	**Luther Wright Jr.** Office Managing Shareholder, Assistant Director of ClientTraining, Ogletree Deakins
10:00 am - 10:15 am	**Break**		
10:15 am - 11:15 am	**The EEOC in 2026: Shifting Enforcement Priorities** BURR & FORMAN	The EEOC enforcement landscape has changed significantly, requiring HR professionals to adapt to new priorities, leadership direction, and approaches to workplace discrimination. This session provides a practical overview of current EEOC enforcement trends, evolving interpretations of civil rights protections, and the impact of changes to DEI-related guidance. Using real-world examples and case studies, attendees will learn how to evaluate organizational risk, strengthen documentation practices, and respond effectively to EEOC charges. Participants will leave with actionable insights to help ensure compliance and navigate today's shifting regulatory environment with confidence.	**Emily Mack** Partner, Burr & Forman
11:15 am - 11:30 am	**Break**		
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	**Harassment Liability: Evolving Standards** BASS BERRY + SIMS	Workplace harassment laws and employer obligations continue to evolve, creating new challenges for HR professionals and organizational leaders. This session examines emerging legal trends, changes in employer liability standards, and practical strategies for preventing harassment and promoting a respectful workplace culture. Attendees will gain actionable insights to strengthen policies, reduce organizational risk, and build a safer, more inclusive work environment.	**Mary Leigh Pirtle** Member, Bass Berry & Sims
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	**Lunch presented by** CHUBB Benefits		
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	**Hidden in Plain Sight: Identifying Compliance Risk Across Your Hybrid Workforce** Ogletree Deakins	Hybrid and remote work are now permanent realities, but many workplace policies have not kept pace with evolving legal requirements. This session helps HR professionals identify compliance risks across a distributed workforce, including wage and hour issues, AI-driven HR tools, employee monitoring, leave administration, restrictive covenants, and arbitration agreements. Using a practical audit framework, attendees will learn how to assess their organization's policies, address compliance gaps, and prepare for emerging legal developments that will shape the workplace in 2027 and beyond.	**Susan Gorey** Senior Counsel, Ogletree Deakins
2:30 pm - 2:45 pm	**Break**		
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	**Investigations and Separations: Smarter Compliance for HR's Riskiest Moments** BAKER DONELSON	Employee separations and workplace investigations are two of HR's highest-stakes responsibilities and two of its most error-prone. Manual processes, inconsistent documentation, and outdated workflows continue to expose organizations to wrongful termination claims, WARN Act violations, and investigation challenges, often surfacing at the most critical moments—from last minute termination requests and complex severance decisions to high-risk investigations where documentation gaps only surface too late.	**Chris Barrett** Attorney, Baker Donaldson
3:45 pm - 4:00 pm	**Break**		
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	**The Retaliation Trap: Managing Performance And Other Employment Actions After Complaints, Leave, and Other Protected Activity** BUTLER | SNOW	This session explores how routine HR actions can lead to retaliation claims when they involve employees who have recently engaged in protected activities, such as filing complaints, requesting leave or accommodations, or participating in workplace investigations. Through real-world scenarios, attendees will learn to recognize common risk factors, including poor documentation, problematic timing, and ineffective manager communications. The session also provides practical guidance on managing performance, discipline, and termination decisions in a way that minimizes legal risk and helps ensure employment actions remain fair, consistent, and defensible.	**Liesel Carmen-Burks** Attorney at Butler Snow LLP
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	**Networking Happy Hour**		

DAY 2

Time	Session	Abstract	Speaker
7:45 am - 8:50 am	**Registration and Check-in, Breakfast**		
8:50 am - 9:00 am	**Welcome**		**Chris Barrett**
9:00 am - 10:15 am	**In the Hot Seat: A Live Mock Deposition**	Watch a workplace conflict unfold in real time, then watch it end up in a deposition. In this interactive session, participating employment attorneys act out a workplace escalation from first complaint to litigation, then put the HR leader on the stand for a live mock deposition. Attendees get a front-row seat to what depositions actually look like, followed by a facilitated debrief on what HR did right, where the exposure crept in, and the do's and don'ts for holding your own under oath whether you're representing yourself, your employees, or your organization.	**TBD** TBD
10:15 am - 10:30 am	**Break**		
10:30 am - 11:30 am	**Ask the Experts: Live Legal Panel Q&A**	Bring your toughest employment law questions. This open-forum panel features experienced employment attorneys ready to weigh in on the issues HR professionals are navigating right now, from compliance gray areas to real-world scenarios you're facing back at the office. No question too niche, no topic off-limits: this is your chance to get direct, practical answers live from legal experts in the room.	**TBD** TBD
11:30 am - 6:00 am	**Event Closes**		