

**For Immediate Release****Date:** April 21, 2008**Contact:** Diane Neri**Telephone:** (712) 233-9030, Ext. 1037

**Sex Harassment, Workplace Romances and Dress Codes:
What Employers Need to Know to Avoid Costly Mistakes and Litigation**

Sioux City, IOWA – Barbara Tapscott, an employment attorney with Iowa Workforce Development, will be discussing three topics of interest to all employers -- sex harassment, workplace romances and dress codes. Siouxland Employers' Council and Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) will be hosting this seminar. The event will be held on Thursday, May 8, 2008, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. The location is Western Iowa Tech Community College, 4647 Stone Avenue, Room L416, in Sioux City, IA.

This seminar is a must for managers and supervisors! Barb will discuss recent sex harassment and consensual romances cases, potential employer liability, conducting investigations, and what employers can do to protect themselves and their company. In addition, she will discuss what kind of dress codes employers may enforce. Sample harassment and dress code policies will be available.

Barbara Tapscott is a frequent speaker and trainer before employer and human resource groups. Barb has worked in private practice where she counseled employers on numerous aspects of employment and labor law. She has bachelor and master's degrees in journalism from Iowa State University, and received her law degree from George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C.

Topics to be discussed at the session include:

- What constitutes sexual harassment and how it relates to sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Does Iowa law require sexual harassment training for supervisors?
- Friendly behavior or sexual harassment? Is intent the same as the impact?
- Preventing sexual harassment: what sexual harassment policies and procedures should include.
- Is an employer liable for acts of sexual harassment when they don't know it is happening?
- Workplace romance and how it affects office morale, decision making and what to do when it goes wrong.
- Regulating off-duty conduct: how far can employers can go?
- How a dress code policy can help your company, what to include in a dress code policy, options to handle piercing and tattoos, and strategies to deal with the flirtatious dresser.
- Dress code rules to avoid that could leave you liable for claims of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, or similar grounds.
- Recent court rulings on dress codes and appearance policies and what they mean for your workplace.
- When you must make dress code exceptions for workers who cite religious or health reasons.
- Counseling employees about dress code issues.
- Miscellaneous tough issues involving sex harassment, workplace romances and dress codes

There is a \$25 registration fee to attend this meeting. To register for the seminar, contact Diane Neri, Iowa Workforce Development, at (712) 233-9030, Ext. 1037 or by e-mail at diane.neri@iwd.iowa.gov Please register by Monday, May 5, 2008.

Siouxland Employers' Council is an employer group in Region 12, supported locally by Iowa Workforce Development, and is part of the statewide Employers' Council of Iowa system. This employers group addresses workforce issues, and provides both educational and networking opportunities for employers.

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