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NEW LAWS FOR THE NEW YEAR
(Part One)

Again, we thank the Daily Journal for printing a compendium of statutes adopted during 2020. As in the past, this newsletter references only a fraction of new legislation which may be of interest to the current clients of our practice.

1. Work Injuries

There is now a rebuttable presumption that illness or death related to Covid is an occupational injury eligible for Workers' Compensation benefits.

2. Horse Racing

a. There are new health and safety requirements to protect the animals.

b. Veterinarians must disclose all equine medical records as required and publish weekly fatality and drug test reports at licensed tracks.

3. Football

The Youth Football Act requires a qualified EMT to be present during play to "evaluate" participants and provide, when appropriate, prehospital emergency care.

4. Contractors

a. Tree Service Contractors are now covered by a state licensing board.

b. There is now a separate license for Residential Remodeling Contractors.

5. Employment

Last year the legislature prohibited "no rehire" provisions in agreements to settle employment disputes and, this year, amended

the law to allow such provisions for an "aggrieved" worker acting in "bad faith".

6. Sports

Now unlawful to use the name of a professional team in a website to sell tickets deceptively.

7. Consumer Contracts

Senior citizens now have five days, instead of three, to cancel certain consumer contracts.

8. Student Loans

Specified actions are prohibited in servicing loans so to protect borrowers.

9. Business Names

There are new technical rules for naming corporations, LLCs, and partnerships to avoid misleading the public.

10. Privacy

There are now more technical exemptions to the HIPAA medical privacy laws.

11. Food Code

Ready-to-eat products delivered by third parties must meet certain packaging, preparation, and maintenance requirements to prevent spoilage.

12. Decedents

A legal guardian may bring a wrongful death action just as can a legal parent.

13. Judgments

a. Consumer debt liens on a personal residence cannot be foreclosed.

b. Money held in certain college savings accounts are now exempt from seizure by judgments.

14. Languages

Certain consumer contracts negotiated in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, or Korean must be translated and provided to a consumer for signature in the same language as the contract negotiations had been conducted.

15. Jury Duty

The Franchise Tax Board must now share its lists of state tax filers with the jury commissioners of each county for use in jury selection.

16. Bill Collectors

Will be subject to strict new licensing regulations effective in 2022.

17. Depositions

The Covid pandemic has imposed dramatic challenges to the judicial system. Civil procedure now allows for remote depositions and new types of electronic filing. These virtual court procedures may be here to stay.

18. Child Support

Payments may be suspended while an obligated parent is incarcerated.

19. Personal Protective Equipment

Government agencies must establish PPE stockpiles sufficient for 45 days of surge consumption.

20. Marijuana

New regulations are transitioning this industry toward the traditional model of the wine industry where the agricultural location of a product's origin is crucial to perceptions of value and must be reflected on labeling.

21. Menstrual Products

There are new ingredient disclosures required for feminine hygiene products and cosmetics.

22. Fragrances and Flavors

New regulations require manufacturers to specifically list each intentionally added ingredient according to certain universal product codes.

23. Food Delivery

Computer platforms for meal distribution must obtain agreements with the preparers authorizing the platform to take orders and deliver meals.

24. Trapped Children

A person who rescues an unattended child from a vehicle in certain circumstances is immune from liability for unintended consequences. Break a window to save a life!

This practice serves as a "lawyer of first resort", or "primary care attorney," advocating for small businesses and individuals with disputes and transactions, including accident victims by referral only. We specialize in personalized client service. If we can be of any assistance with your legal issues, consider contacting us as soon as a question is identified. Your recent referrals have been greatly appreciated.

Remember: Preventative lawyering is the most effective kind.

Sincerely,

HARMON SIEFF