

Mary Ruth Houston Discusses the Brave New World of Working at Home in OBJ

The Orlando Business Journal

Orlando

7.22.20

Mary Ruth Houston, Co-Managing Partner of Shutts & Bowen LLP's Orlando office and Chair of the Labor & Employment practice group, recently authored an article for the Orlando Business Journal (OBJ), providing an employment law perspective on the merits and pitfalls of working from home.

In her article, "A Brave New World of Working At Home," Mary Ruth discusses potential legal implications of the at-home work trend, including obstacles ranging from timekeeping to injuries. She also points to regulatory and accommodation challenges that may be difficult to manage from an at-home working environment. As Mary Ruth points out, however, the long-term benefits of working from home are "worth exploring."

The following excerpt appeared in the Orlando Business Journal on July 20, 2020. Commentary provided by [Mary Ruth Houston](#) – Guest writer.

"O brave new world," exclaimed Miranda in Shakespeare's The Tempest when she first sets eyes on visitors to her island. Perhaps that's how many of us have felt as we have embarked on the journey into a world where working from home seems to have become more commonplace than the daily commute to the office.

Just as any journey into the unknown is fraught with perils, the world of at-home work presents similar challenges, especially from the perspective of employment law. These challenges can take many forms, but revolve especially around the areas of wage and hour regulation, accommodations for those who need them and similar matters. And, of course, these legal issues are coupled with the general human resources need to promote a virtual work environment that fosters communication and creativity.

These problems are not insurmountable, though, and working from home has potential long-term benefits for employers that may outlast the era of the pandemic in which we currently find ourselves.

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To read the full article, [click here](#).

About Mary Ruth Houston

Mary Ruth Houston is Co-Managing Partner of the Orlando office and Chair of the firm's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group. She is certified as a mediator in Florida courts and the Middle District of Florida. She was selected as Orlando's 2020 "Lawyer of the Year" in Litigation – Labor and Employment, by *Best Lawyers in America*®. Mary Ruth focuses on business and employment-related issues using a problem-solving approach that helps clients concentrate on their core business. With over 30 years of experience handling complex disputes, her understanding of business issues outside the courtroom enables her to advise companies on how to avoid litigation, minimize its effects or, when litigation is required, handle it efficiently and effectively. Mary Ruth's practice encompasses a broad range of labor and employment issues, including employee discharge and discrimination cases, including age, sex, race, national origin, religion and disability claims, as well as cases involving restrictive covenants and wage-hour matters (individual and collective). She also has extensive experience in negotiating and drafting complex employment and severance agreements. Her litigation practice also encompasses a wide variety of commercial, contract, intellectual property, and business tort disputes.

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