Julie Gottshall Discusses Using Social Media and the Internet as Part of Hiring Practices With *Crain's Chicago Business*

October 3, 2015

Julie Gottshall, Chicago head of Katten's Employment Law and Litigation practice, was quoted in a *Crain's Chicago Business* article on the legality of using social media and the Internet when evaluating potential candidates for hire. "First things first: Searching potential employees' names on the Internet is legal, as long as an employer is viewing public information," Julie said. "Illinois' Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act, signed into law in 2013, prohibits employers from asking for passwords to sites or forcing access." She went on to explain how what's gained and used from public information is fair, as long as it doesn't involve a protected characteristic, including race, age, sexual orientation, disability status and arrest records. Political leanings aren't explicitly protected, "but if you're looking to use that, proceed very, very carefully," Julie stated. In her view, risks and cautions are offset by a huge benefit, and that's "insight into how a person might behave on the job," she added. "Employers are actually foolish if they don't use social media."

CONTACTS

For more information, contact your Katten attorney or any of the following attorneys.

Julie L. Gottshall
+1.312.902.5645
julie.gottshall@katten.com

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