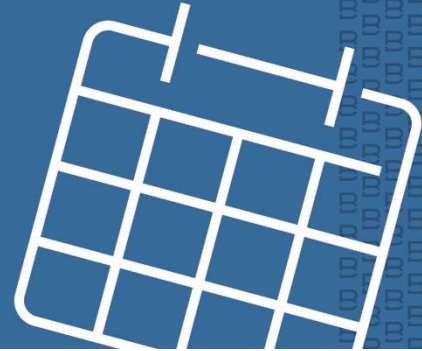


The Work Week

News from the
Bassford Remele
Labor & Employment
Practice Group



September 8, 2026

**From Labor Day Reflection to Year-Round Strategy:
Strengthening Employee and Labor Relations**

[Elisabeth A. Brady](#)

We hope you enjoyed a restful Labor Day weekend. While Labor Day colloquially denotes an unofficial end to summer, the annual federal holiday began during the Industrial Revolution of the late 19th century to celebrate and recognize employees and workers.

Labor Day formally became a national holiday on June 28, 1894, signed into law by President Grover Cleveland following a major railroad strike in Chicago, but its origins date back to 1882—the same year Bassford Remele was founded.

On September 5, 1882, thousands of workers in New York City—facing harsh working conditions, unsafe workplaces, and long working days—took unpaid time off to march from City Hall to Union Square, in what became the first Labor Day parade in U.S. history. We now memorialize Labor Day on the first Monday of September, in honor of that march.

While the labor movement has advanced by leaps and bounds since, employers can take the opportunity to honor their employees with special messages of support on Labor Day, and by establishing strong employee and labor relations practices year-round through strategic planning.

Proactively dedicating time and resources toward effective employee and labor relations strategies will assist the organization to identify and achieve the goals of both management and employees, and can help avoid reactive decision-making in the face of employee or labor conflict.

Employers should consider the following organizational issues and best practices in developing or advancing their employee business planning and labor strategy:

- Know your organization’s mission, vision and values, and understand how leadership wishes to see these principles translated in the employment and labor context.
- Realistically assess your current labor and employee relations dynamic. Do a pulse check. Are employees generally engaged? Has there been an adversarial history? Ask, “What risks do we face?”
- Determine what kind of labor and employee relations approach will work for your organization.
 - Are you focused on compliance? Collaboration?
 - Are you currently a unionized environment? What’s going well? What needs improvement?
 - Is there potential for union organization? Understand the process and plan now to respond to organizing efforts.
- Develop and implement strategies in alignment with your organizational labor and employee relations goals.
 - Consult with interested and/or affected employee and labor parties to ensure adequate acknowledgment and ownership of the plan, where possible.
 - Determine how you will measure the plan’s effectiveness. What actions or metrics will be needed to evaluate the plan's success?
- Establish a cadence for revisiting and revising the plan, as necessary.

An effective employee and labor relations strategic plan is critical for all organizations, so whether you’re seeking to improve existing relationships and minimize risk, or aiming to solidify and advance already-successful dynamics, Bassford Remele’s labor and employment team is here to assist and advise your organization to achieve its goals.

[Learn About Our Labor & Employment Practice](#)