



During the period of August 5th – 7th, 2016 Florida sales tax will not be collected on sales of clothing, footwear, and certain accessories selling for \$60 or less per item and on certain school supplies selling for \$15 or less per item. Shop 'til you drop!



We are proud to announce Alpha Business Solutions has been selected as a finalist for the 2016 Manatee Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year Award! We appreciate all of your support.

## WORKERS' COMP RATE INCREASE

Recent decisions by the Florida Supreme Court are expected to have a significant impact on workers compensation rates. The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) announced a proposed rate increase of 19.6 percent.

The OIR has scheduled a public hearing in Tallahassee on August 16 to analyze the pros and cons of the rate hike. We will keep our clients updated as we learn more.



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### Is your Company's Employee Handbook up to Date?

To provide the maximum benefit to an employer, handbooks should be periodically reviewed to ensure accuracy and legal compliance. Failing to follow written policies is often cited by employees as evidence in litigation. Below is a list of some of the considerations for assessing and updating your Employee Handbook.

**Vacation/Sick/PTO Policy:** If your Company has a Vacation, Sick and/or PTO Policy, the handbook should clearly identify when an employee is eligible for benefits, when the employee accrues benefits, the amount of benefits that the employee accrues, and what happens to employee's vacation, sick and/or PTO benefits upon certain events (end of year, or termination of employment.)

**Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy:** The Handbook should include a statement that the Company prohibits discrimination and harassment based on any legally protected characteristic as well as a procedure for related complaints. Some jurisdictions (e.g. City of Sarasota, City of Tampa) have local ordinances that offer greater protections.

**Open Door Policy:** Many employers include a separate "Open Door" policy that invites employees to address any complaints or concerns in accordance with a set procedure. This policy is a good way for employers to learn about and address issues in the workplace before they develop into bigger problems.

**Source:** Anne W. Chapman, Esq, Labor and Employment Attorney—[Blalock Walters](#)

## WANT TO CLAIM MISSING MONEY?



The Florida Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Department of Financial Services currently holds over \$1 billion in unclaimed assets. Assets such as watches, coins, jewelry, stamps, and currency as well as securities and bonds. Whether you are entitled to a \$15 utility overpayment from your college days or you are the beneficiary of the contents of a long lost relatives safe deposit box - you'll want to search this database. Simply visit [Florida Treasure Hunt](#) and search for your name.



## How to Make Ice Cream WITHOUT AN ICE CREAM MAKER

While using an electric or hand-cranked ice cream maker will get you to your sweet reward a little easier, it's not a necessity. Here's how to make do without one:

- Combine the ingredients for your ice cream mixture following ANY RECIPE. Chill the mixture over an ice bath. Meanwhile, freeze an empty freezer-safe shallow pan. Stainless steel works well for this.
- Place the cold mixture into the cold pan.
- Chill for about 20 minutes and check your ice cream. As the edges start to freeze, stir the mixture rapidly with a whisk to break up the partially frozen ice cream. This will help make it smooth and creamy. Return to the freezer.
- Stir ice cream vigorously every 30 minutes until it is firmly frozen. This may be repeated 4 to 5 times until mixture is smooth and creamy. If ice cream becomes too hard, place it into the refrigerator until it becomes soft enough to beat and continue the process.
- Ripen the ice cream by storing it in a covered freezer container until ready to serve. Enjoy!