

## Trending Now: How The Latest News Going Viral Can Lead To Employment Litigation

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A downed Russian airliner, the tragic Paris attacks, the European refugee crisis, states closing their borders to Syrian nationals, Charlie Sheen's HIV diagnosis. What do these all have in common? They are hot topics for discussion around the watercooler. And they also will bring out a multitude of opinions. What's the problem? Opinions can be controversial and, to some, down right offensive. Healthy debate about how the United States should handle the war on terror could be construed as evidence of religious discrimination (in some cases). Discussion regarding Charlie Sheen's HIV diagnosis can also quickly spiral out of control and later be construed as evidence of disability discrimination. It's a problem and employers need to be aware of it. So how can you protect yourself? Well, you certainly cannot stifle discussion about what is happening outside of the workplace. Nevertheless, employers are encouraged to step up, stay on top of what's trending and put a stop to any discussion that could reasonably be construed as inconsistent with the Company's EEO policies. You won't be popular. But let's face it: running a business is not about winning a popularity contest. Want to stay on top of what's trending? Create a Twitter account and keep apprised of the most popular hashtags. The amount of work is minimal and you'll be tuned in to what topics are floating around the workplace.

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