

## What Businesses Need To Know About Changes to NY Whistleblower Law, Newsday, featuring, Keith Gutstein

By Jamie Herzlich

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New York has greatly expanded whistleblower protections for employees who report alleged wrongdoings by employers in the New Year. The amended law, effective Jan. 26, expands not only the type of claims that may be lodged against an employer, but also expands the statute of limitations to file a claim. Protections will be expanded beyond employees to include former employees and independent contractors..

Some experts say the changes could open up firms to abuse from disgruntled employees. "Concern for abuse is real," says Keith Gutstein, co-managing partner of the Woodbury office of Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck LLP. That's why employers need to take precautions and know their responsibilities, he said. Companies are required to let employees know about the changes by posting a notice about the amended law in an easily accessible and well-lit location, he said. He also advises updating whistleblower/anti-retaliation policies in employee handbooks, reiterating that an employer won't retaliate against an employee for pointing out alleged wrongdoing. Another important step is training managers how to handle complaints (i.e. not to ignore them or write them off as disruptive), Gutstein said. For firms with a poor-performing employee, the new law "emphasizes how critically important it is to document bad performance," he said. See link for full story