972 Working Outside the U.S. Has its Differences

Do you ever wonder about working conditions in other countries? What are some of the employment laws like when you leave the U.S.? I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll look at that, next, on The Extra Point.

If you ever decide to leave the United States to live in another country, what would it mean for you in terms of benefits? Here are a few examples.

In Bulgaria, you'll find the most generous maternity leave benefits in the world. Bulgarian employees receive more than 55 weeks of maternity leave, with 46 of those weeks being paid.

Even the worst paid maternity leave in Europe is a far cry from the benefits in the United States, as Sweden still offers 12 weeks of paid leave.

The United States is the world's only high-income country to not offer paid maternity leave on a federal level. Paid leave is guaranteed in 178 countries, but not in the United States.

Only 12 percent of women in the U.S. private sector have access to any sort of paid maternity leave, and 25 percent of women are forced to return to work within two weeks of giving birth to support their families.

In Saudi Arabia, men are banned from working in women's clothing or cosmetic shops. This law went on the books in 2012, following a boycott by women of the nation's shops as they were annoyed of continuously having to purchase these products from men.

Staying in the Middle East, government employees in the United Arab Emirates are offered time off to read during work. By law, readings are limited to material on personal and professional development while at work. That's my kind of law. This is part of a national program to encourage reading. Coffee shops are obliged to provide reading material. Children are also provided with reading materials at birth and at the ages of one and two.

Bringing the conversation closer to home, we have the Metabo Law in Japan. If you haven't heard of this, buckle up. The Metabo Law was introduced in 2008 in Japan to combat nation-wide obesity. The employment law reads that all companies and local governments have to measure the waistlines of employees aged 44 to 74 during annual health checkups.

That means that roughly 45% of the population will have their waistlines measured every year. Women's waistlines can measure up to 35.4 inches and men's waistlines can measure up to 33.5 inches. Employees whose waist sizes are over these limits are required to lose the excess weight within a given period.

Companies are required to provide weight loss classes through their healthcare providers for employees who cannot lose the weight on their own. The national government also has the authority to impose fines on local governments, and companies that do not meet specified targets.

A lot of people didn't get too riled up with the idea of vaccine mandates. What would you say if the president came out with a waistline mandate? What if all the men in Guam had to be under a 33.5-inch waist, and the women had to measure less than 35.4 inches?

What if private companies and GovGuam could be fined when employees' waistlines exceeded those limitations? What if OSHA was tasked with the job of fining employers who let people slide? What if the government encouraged skinny people to be whistleblowers, turning in those whose belly protruded past acceptability?

(Con't.)

What if, in order to avoid fines, employers enforced diets on employees who couldn't or didn't want to lose the weight?

What if people had to show a waistline approval card before being allowed to eat in a restaurant or get take-out, or to buy certain foods at the store. "What, no card?! Okay lady, put back the Cheetos and the Mountain Dew!"

Nah, come on, this kind of thing could never happen in America, right?

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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