

High-Stakes Contract Talks Spark Labor Actions In Pandemic

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David Barron was quoted in *Law360* discussing how safety concerns and demands for hazard pay are compounding the wage and benefits issues that typically drive conflicts at the bargaining table, while employers have been hesitant to make concessions amid a business environment as uncertain as any they've ever faced. "The stakes probably are about as high as they've ever been, in terms of negotiating new contracts," said David. And economic uncertainty has clouded contract talks, even for employers that so far haven't taken a hit, David said. Typically, parties to CBA talks base their bargaining positions on forecasts for the next few years, he said. But it's hard to look ahead with any certainty now. "No one knows what the next three years are going to look like if no one knows what the next three months are going to look like," David said. "It makes it very difficult to negotiate a three-year contract."

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