

Ignorance may be bliss, but it's a lousy legal strategy

Ignoring a lawsuit won't make it go away. In fact, it almost certainly means a default judgment in the employee's favor. Be sure managers and executives understand they must take all legal paperwork seriously.

Recent case: Nael sued his employers, the owners of a Thai restaurant, over alleged wage underpayments.

The owners were no-shows—they neither filed an answer to the federal lawsuit nor bothered answering the mail the court sent their way.

The court ordered the owners to pay about \$46,000 in unpaid wages. Then it doubled that amount as liquidated damages under the Fair Labor Standards Act. It added attorneys' fees to that, plus additional penalties. It then told the owners they had to pay up within 90 days or face another 15% penalty. (*Lopez v. Royal Thai Plus*, ED NY, 2018)