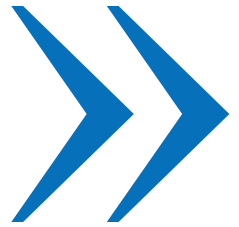


# MARTIN<sub>LAW</sub>

*Working for people who can't.*



» Workers' Compensation » Social Security Disability » Long-Term Disability » Veterans' Benefits

TOP  
WORK  
PLACES  
2015

philly.com



## OUR ATTORNEYS

- » George Martin
- » Matthew L. Wilson
- » Joseph C. Huttemann
- » Alfred J. Carlson
- » John P. Dogum
- » Amit J. Shah
- » Leah Cilo
- » Joseph A. Conlan
- » Joseph D. Capitan
- » Lisa D. Eldridge
- » Maria E. Bermudez
- » Frank J. Udinson
- » Elise L. Bradley
- » Andrew Yang
- » Joseph L. Ring

## Martin Law Named Top Workplace by Philly.com

Pictured above:  
Our staff at our annual team building "retreat" day on March 6 at The Franklin Institute.

On March 23, Philly.com recognized 100 Companies and organizations in Philadelphia as Top Workplaces 2015. These companies have been recognized as Top

**“I think the partners at the firm are experienced enough to do the right thing. They each bring something new and different to the table. This makes our firm one of the best around.”**

Workplaces based solely on surveys about the workplace completed by their employees.

We are so honored to have once again been named a Top Workplace among small companies (fewer than 150 employees.) This year we ranked #16 on the list of 35!

We are so grateful to our employees who nominated us and took the survey which put us in this position.

Top Workplaces are not only better places to work but are more likely to be successful than peer organizations. And we sure think it makes our organization better to serve our clients needs. Happy employees mean happy clients!

Just take a look at some of the things our amazing team said about working at Martin Law:

*"I feel like I am part of a family."*

*"The people I work with are enjoyable."*

*"The attention and genuine care for those who work for them."*

*"The ability to help injured workers."*

*"I think the partners at the firm are experienced enough to do the right thing. They each bring something new and different to the table. This makes our firm one of the best around."*

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branch offices or appointment-only locations

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## #MartinStrong

At Martin Law we believe happy employees make great employees. And in the long run that's best for our clients. We have proudly hosted an annual team building and training workshop for the past 14 years. In March, we gathered at The Franklin Institute for the day with Dale Carnegie Training to "Take Relationships to New Heights."



UNDER FIRE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4 »

funeral expenses, or disability modifications to a home or a car for injured workers, all benefits that are mandated under the current system. A cost-saving measure for companies, a burden on injured employees. Even more alarming, a Tennessee senator in support of the legislation was quoted as saying, "I anticipate if we pass this, the Tennessee option will become the US option."

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PA WORKERS?

At a time when more than 60 percent of states have decreased workers' compensation benefits or made it harder to obtain such benefits, Pennsylvania has remained constant and protected the rights of injured workers. For example, the maximum compensation for the loss of an eye in a work accident is just \$27,280 in Alabama, but \$261,525 in Pennsylvania. And, unlike many other states, Pennsylvania has also not changed its laws to set arbitrary time limits on temporary wage benefits, expand the use of outside medical reviewers or increase the instances of denying claims based on pre-existing conditions.

While Pennsylvania has gone through several rounds of changes over the last two decades, the changes have not been nearly as extreme as many other states. In terms of choice of physician provisions in the law, Pennsylvania requires that employees treat injuries with an employer-preferred physician for the first 90 days after the injury. However, this requirement only applies if an employer produces a list of at least six providers and the employer had the employee sign two documents indicating the employee's acknowledgement of rights and duties. While this

can place some restrictions on an employee's choice of medical provider, it is still less cumbersome and restrictive than provisions in many other states' workers' comp laws.

In our experience, most employers fail to comply with the requirements above, leaving an injured worker free to choose his or her own physician right away. It is important to discuss your situation with an attorney, not only to find out for sure whether you can choose your own doctor, but also understand the true extent of the benefits available to you here in Pennsylvania.

The fact that radical changes have not occurred in Pennsylvania recently does not mean that such changes to the state's workers' comp system will never be proposed. What happens if the corporations funding ARAWC put Pennsylvania on their hit list?

### LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ATTACK ON WORKERS' COMP

We urge you to read these two articles that cover the above details in great depth:

- ProPublica's Insult to Injury Series  
<http://bit.ly/1xYGBnB>
- Mother Jones 'Campaign to Gut Workers' Comp'  
<http://bit.ly/1xzll62>

We applaud these outlets for shedding light on this important topic, and will keep you informed of ongoing developments.

» *If you have any questions please call our experienced attorneys for a free, no obligation consultation by calling 215-587-8400.*

## WORKPLACE SAFETY

THIS IS THE THIRD IN A SERIES ABOUT WORKPLACE SAFETY.

Healthcare is the fastest-growing sector of the U.S. economy, employing over 18 million workers. Women represent nearly 80% of the healthcare work force. Health care workers face a wide range of hazards on the job, including needle-stick injuries, back injuries, latex allergy, violence, and stress. Although it is possible to prevent or reduce healthcare worker exposure to these hazards, healthcare workers continue to experience injuries and illnesses in the workplace. Cases of nonfatal occupational injury

and illness among to healthcare workers are among the highest of any industry sector. By contrast, two of the most hazardous industries, agriculture and construction, are safer today than they were a decade ago.

All of us at Martin Law are advocates for safer work environments and the protection of employees and employers alike from accidents.



Follow us Facebook for weekly safety tips to keep those wheels turning on safety prevention in the workplace.

» *If you have any questions please call our experienced attorneys for a free, no obligation consultation by calling 215-587-8400.*

# GOV. WOLF PROPOSES LEGAL SERVICES TAX

On March 3, 2015, Governor Tom Wolf presented his inaugural budget address. During this budget address to the General Assembly, Governor Wolf presented details of his new tax plan which would include a new sales tax on legal services. This proposal would impose a 6.6% sales tax on legal services in Pennsylvania.

Martin Law along with many other attorneys, companies and associations strongly opposes this proposed budget. For many citizens in Pennsylvania, such as workers' comp recipients, hiring a lawyer is necessary and it not considered a luxury item. Increasing the cost of legal services would negatively impact persons of limited means who often need a

lawyer's assistance and will increase the cost of doing business in Pennsylvania.

Please take a moment now to reach out to your state legislators to ask them to vote AGAINST this proposed tax.

*Even a very short message expressing opposition is important and effective!*

» *Please contact the governors office today by going to [www.governor.pa.gov/contact](http://www.governor.pa.gov/contact) or contact us to find out more by calling 215-587-8400.*

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT

At Martin Law, community support is one of our core values. For the third year in a row, "Martin Law Gives Back," continues to choose a different community organization to support through various donations and volunteering.

# MEET OUR NEW PARTNER TEAM!



PICTURED L-R: Anne Jordan, Ali Soscia, Amit Shah and Pamela D'Ambrosio at our 2014 holiday party where we also celebrated Amit becoming a partner at the firm.

*partner* AMIT SHAH has been with the firm since 2007. He earned his law degree from the Dickinson School of Law of The Pennsylvania State University and was made a partner of the firm in January 2015. Amit lives in

Northeast Philly with his wife. They have a three year old son and are expecting another child in May.

*paralegal* PAMELA D'AMBROSIO has been with the firm since 2007. She graduated from Bucks County Community College and Penn State University and lives with her husband and son in Northeast Philadelphia.

*legal secretary* ALI SOSCIA has been with the firm since 2013. She graduated from West Chester University and enjoys traveling and giving back to her community as a member of Martin Gives Back philanthropic committee.

*legal assistant* ANNE JORDAN has been with the firm since 2013. She graduated from Penn State University and enjoys spending time "down the shore" with her family and friends.



*A group of our proud donors show off their stickers!*

» In January, the firm supported the **American Red Cross** and pushed to increase the firm's blood donations. The team was able to get **39 blood donations** from the drive – up from 24 donations we collected at our previous blood drive.

» In February, the firm raised **\$150** to sponsor the **Indian Valley Ambucs** pool tournament. This is a charity near and dear to our paralegal, Amanda's heart. They provide Amtrykes to children and veterans with disabilities.

» In March, the firm supported the **Ronald McDonald House** by raising **\$300** to buy food, after which **10 people from firm donated five hours** of their time on a Saturday to prepare a dinner for guests staying at the house.

## *The Importance of Medical Care:*

When dealing with a disability case, whether it's workers' comp, SSD/SSI, LTD, or Veterans benefits, your medical treatment with the proper doctors is the most important part of your case. We can't stress enough the importance of you attending your appointments and keeping us informed of your medical conditions.

*Please contact us if you need help with a doctor appointment or need a new doctor. We have a large network of doctors to help address your needs.*



Ashley T., Ali, Ashley S., Jenn, Robin, Meredith, Sharnette and Joe Capitan volunteered their time on Saturday, March 28 to cook for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House.

**MARTINLAW**  
Working for people who can't.



## IN THIS ISSUE:

Top Workplaces	P.1
Martin Team Building	P.2
Workplace Safety	P.2
Governor's Legal Tax	P.3
Featured Team	P.3
Martin Law Gives Back	P.3
Worker' Comp Under Fire	P.4

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION UNDER FIRE

THE DISMANTLING OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND HOW IT AFFECTS PENNSYLVANIA.



Can you imagine getting seriously injured in the course of your job and no longer being protected by the wage and medical benefits that are currently mandated by your state government? This could be on the horizon for Workers' Compensation.

In addition to recent cutbacks that some states around the country have already made, nearly two dozen major corporations have now banded together to drastically change (and, in effect, reduce) those benefits. These companies, which include such familiar names as Walmart, Nordstrom, Safeway, Lowe's, Macy's, Kohl's, and Sysco have financed a lobbying group called the Association for Responsible Alternatives to Workers' Compensation (ARAWC) that is working to dismantle legislation protecting workers, one state at a time.

private employers to opt out of that state's workers' compensation plan. Employers would still be required to carry insurance, but could write any rules they'd like governing when, for how long, and for which reasons an injured employee can access medical benefits and wages. Often, in these instances, employees who require support beyond those parameters would need to sue for higher benefits in FEDERAL court – a costly, specialized and lengthy process. The head of ARAWC's legislative strategy is a lobbyist who successfully pushed for the change in Oklahoma in 2014. Now, the ARAWC has set its sights on Tennessee. Under the current Tennessee system, employers must cover a worker's medical expenses for as long as he/she needs treatment. This bill, if enacted, would allow companies to stop paying lifetime benefits after three years or \$300,000, whichever comes first. Also, employers would not be responsible to pay for artificial limbs, hearing aids, home care,

*“This piece of legislation is designed as a cost-saving measure for the employer. Anywhere they save a dollar, it costs the employees a dollar. It's just a shift in costs.”*



The ARAWC's mission is to deploy lobbyists in each state to push legislation that allows