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From our Office

Can you believe that fall is already here? 2021 has sure been flying by for us here at the office!

Over the last few months, our team has been hard at work! At this time, we are continuing to handle almost all matters remotely. As we focus on disability and injury law, we understand that our clients face additional hurdles and challenges during this pandemic, and that many are more susceptible to the virus. It is very important to us that we are doing our part to help keep our clients and team members safe.

At this time, we remain equipped to handle all aspects of a case, from start to finish, without requiring you to physically come into our office. All can be handled from the comfort of your home! Currently, the Social Security Administration is still handling all disability claims remotely as well. Hearings are being conducted via phone or video call. We evaluate on a case-by-case basis which hearing format is best for a client's claim. SSA has not announced when they will return to in-person hearings.

We have also been hard at work in our community! Recently, Team Hankey adopted the blocks around our offices through Keep Indianapolis Beautiful. Each week, a few of our team members head out and pick up trash in our neighborhood. Our team also recently sponsored the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Out of the Darkness Walk. Several of our attorneys and team members participated in the walk as well! For more frequent and timely updates, be sure to check out our Facebook page and give us a like!

We know that times remain uncertain, but we remain here for you as we all work through this pandemic together. We wish you the best!

*-Charles,
Ashley & Stacy*





Part-Time Work

We often get asked by our clients if they can work part-time, while they are waiting on their disability hearing. Unfortunately, this is a tricky answer.

Ethically, we must let clients know that any work has the risk of being viewed negatively by a Judge. Some Judges view part-time work more negatively than others, and you do not get to pick which Judge will review your case. However, we understand that this process is lengthy, and that part-time work might be necessary to get by during this time. If you need to work part-time, we offer the following advice:

- ▶ In choosing a part-time position, keep in mind that the more strenuous the job is, the more likely that part-time work will harm your credibility in front of the Judge.
- ▶ Keep your earnings as minimal as possible. If your earnings go over Substantial Gainful Activity, you may not be entitled to benefits.
- ▶ Let your attorney know when you start working part-time. They will need to know how many hours you are working, and your rate of pay.
- ▶ Make notes about how you feel at the end of your shift. The Judge will want to know why you physically or mentally could not work more than part-time.
- ▶ If your employer is providing you with accommodations, see if your boss would be willing to write a letter for you about those. Accommodations may include letting you miss work or leave work early, allowing you to sit when other workers have to stand, allowing you to take extra breaks, etc.
- ▶ If you have co-workers who have to assist you with certain job duties, ask your co-workers if they would be willing to write a statement about how they help you.
- ▶ If your doctor has limited you to only working a certain number of hours, ask your doctor to put that restriction down in writing for you.
- ▶ If you obtain any of the above documentation, get a copy to your attorney as quickly as possible.

CAUTION WET FLOOR



As the weather cools off and the days get shorter, people start looking forward to the holiday season. However, this enjoyable time can be littered with hazards that can increase the chances of a slip-and-fall accident. Did you know that over 25,000 slips-and-falls happen every day in the United States? To help you avoid an injury this season, here are four slip-and-fall hazards to watch out for.

4 biggest slip-and-fall hazards to avoid this season

1. Lack of Proper Lighting

As the sun starts to set earlier, the colder months can spell disaster for those walking around outside. Areas that are not well-lit, including parking lots and walkways, can put you at risk for injury. All outdoor areas of homes and businesses should have plenty of lighting.

3. Slippery Floors

Colder temperatures produce more ice, sleet, and snow. This excess moisture will inevitably make floors slippery. Floors should be regularly dried, and mats should be put down in high-traffic areas.

2. Wet Leaves

Though the fall foliage is gorgeous to look at, it can also be dangerous. Piles of wet leaves can pose a threat. Dead leaves should be raked off of driveways and walkways. Buildings and businesses should make sure that soggy leaves are not allowed to make their way into entryways.

4. Holiday Decorations

Adorning property with festive décor and lights is a joyous activity for many families and businesses. Wiring for all lights should be checked so that it does not pose a tripping hazard. Wires should be kept off the ground, and wires should be kept out of high-traffic areas.

With these four tips, you can enjoy the holiday season while avoiding injuries.



What to do if you are in an **Auto Accident**

We never expect to be in an auto accident, but no matter how great of a driver you are, accidents still happen every single day. That is why it is important that all drivers know what to do in such a situation:

- 1) **Get to safety.** Make sure you, and anyone else involved, are a safe distance off the road. Unfortunately, drivers approaching the accident can become distracted by the scene.
- 2) **Call for help.** Call 911 to get medical help for anyone who was injured, as well as for helping clearing the road and maintaining safety at the scene. If you need medical treatment, follow their advice. Even if no one was injured, you should still contact the police. The police will complete an accident report, which you will need later. They will also help to identify any witnesses and take their statements. Memories and details can quickly fade, so these initial statements are very important.
- 3) **Gather information.** Write down all the information you can about the other driver and their vehicle. This can include their name, address, phone number, license plate, year/make/model of vehicles involved, and insurance information. Gather the names and contact information of any witnesses. Take pictures on your cell phone of any damage, and also take pictures of the location where the accident occurred. Make personal notes about anything you can remember, such as the weather or road conditions.
- 4) **Protect your rights.** Contact an experienced local personal injury attorney to protect your rights. Often, adverse insurance companies will act friendly and encourage you to settle your claim without an attorney. This is not in your best interest! The insurance company is not your friend. They will attempt to have you settle quickly before the extent of your injuries are fully known. They will attempt to have you make a statement, then use your own words against you down the road. An attorney will help you avoid these pitfalls, will advocate on your behalf, and will work towards getting you the best settlement possible.

Our attorneys have been effectively handling personal injury cases for decades. If you or a loved one find yourself in an accident, don't face the insurance company alone. Remember that our consultations are always free, and we only get paid if we get a recovery for you.

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Community Engagement

At our office, it is very important to us that we make a difference in our community. The pandemic has required us to be more creative in how we do this, but we remain committed to giving back to those around us! So far in 2021, we have had the opportunity to work with some great local organizations:

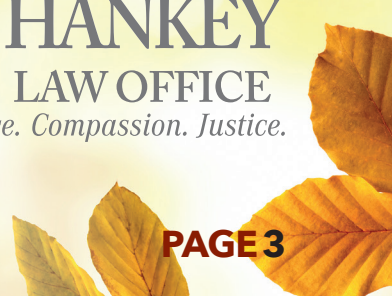
Versiti – In May, we hosted our second blood drive with Versiti. Their famous Bloodmobile parked in front of our office, and Team Hankey, along with their friends and family, signed up to donate. We have another blood drive scheduled for late October!

Second Helpings – In June, we sponsored WISH-TV's second annual GR8 Pasta Push, which collected pasta for Second Helpings. This organization distributes meals to individuals in the community. In addition to the sponsorship, Team Hankey held an internal competition and collected almost 300 additional boxes of pasta to donate.

Teachers' Treasures – In August, we also sponsored WISH-TV's GR8 Paper Push, which collected school supplies for Teachers' Treasures. This organization provides school supplies to local teachers and students. In addition to the sponsorship, our office held another internal competition, and collected over 250 additional school supplies to donate.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention – In September, our office sponsored the Out of the Darkness Walk for the Indiana Chapter of American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Several of our attorneys and team members, along with their friends and families, participated in the walk as well. Partner Stacy Crider sat down with the local director, Kelsey Steuer, earlier this year to learn more about their organization. You can check out this interview on our Facebook page.

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Referrals

The greatest compliment we can receive is the referral of a family member or friend.



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The information included in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for professional legal advice. For your specific situation, please call the appropriate legal professional.

Practice Areas

With 80 years of combined experience, both in and out of the courtroom, the legal professionals of the Hankey Law Office can resolve cases involving:

Disability Claims (SSDI/SSI)
Federal Court Appeals
Long Term Disability
Short Term Disability
ERISA Litigation
Personal Injury

Car Accidents
Truck Accidents
Motorcycle Accidents
Bicycle Accidents
Railroad Crossing/ Train Accidents
Highway Defects

Dangerous Drugs and Devices
Premises Liability
Product Liability
Brain/Head Injuries
Spinal Injuries
Dog Bites /Animal Attacks



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Employees of the Month

We wanted to recognize our recent employees of the month: Cat, Barbara, Carolyn, and Beth!



Cat is one of our receptionists and is new to the Hankey Law team this year. She is very reliable, and always greets the clients in a friendly and compassionate way! If you have called into our office, chances are you have been greeted by her!



Barbara is our other receptionist and is a huge help with our intake team. She works hard and does so with her signature sass that we all know and love. She is also our resident holiday decorator, always making sure our offices look festive!



Carolyn is our Intake Coordinator, and she is always ready and eager to assist clients with anything they may need. If you are a client, you likely have spoken with Carolyn when you first started. She shows up each day with a positive attitude and is always willing to lend a hand to her coworkers!



Beth is our Office Manager and has been with our office for over 20 years. She is very passionate about her work, and she is our resident problem solver! Beth is involved in all aspects of our office, from IT to scheduling hearings. We are lucky to have her on Team Hankey!

These are just a few examples of the wonderful team members at the Hankey Law Office who help make all of the moving parts of a case flow smoothly. We are so lucky to have such a dedicated team!