

Jeffrey A. Risch

Chicago, IL

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PARTNER

Overview

Jeff's practice is entirely devoted to management-side labor and employment law. He takes enormous pride in advising and defending the foundation of our economy: employers. Every day he arises with a passion to aggressively and responsibly represent clients in a broad range of industries.

In his practice, Jeff handles both employment and traditional labor matters. Such matters include: countering various union tactics; navigating government audits; defending discrimination, retaliation and wrongful termination claims; avoiding employee wage and hour controversies; complying with prevailing wage and minimum wage laws; litigating employment contract disputes and unfair competition controversies; upholding independent contractor and contingent workforce relationships; and negotiating collective bargaining agreements.

Jeff's legal knowledge is accompanied by his understanding of his clients' industries, which include construction, banking, manufacturing and food processing, health care (particularly long term care), and transportation, among others. Jeff participates in various trade and professional associations devoted to his clients' diverse industries. He is passionately committed to helping employers stay up-to-date with legal developments and trends unique to their industry.

Jeff has many years of both private practice and in-house counsel experience. He represents employers throughout the U.S. and has taken several prominent cases successfully through arbitration, administrative hearing, trial, and, when necessary, appeal. Jeff advises employers with the purpose of providing them the most efficient avenue to effectively manage. A prolific author and presenter, Jeff is often asked to speak on trending topics in the labor and employment arena by clients and educational providers around the country. He literally wrote the book on Labor & Employment Law for Illinois employers through the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. If you have ever been lucky enough to see Jeff present, you know you are in excellent hands in any negotiation or a courtroom!

SERVICES

- Agribusiness
- Banking & Finance
- Cannabis in the Workplace
- Class Action
- Construction
- COVID-19 Resource Center & Task Force
- Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation
- Employment Advice & Counsel
- Employment Litigation
- Equal Pay Compliance
- Government Regulation, Audit & Compliance
- Health Care
- Immigration & Global Mobility
- Labor, Employment, Benefits & Immigration
- Mandatory Training
- Manufacturing & Food Processing
- OSHA
- Prevailing Wage
- Staffing Agency, Independent

A former manager and current business owner, Jeff understands and relates to the objectives of his clients. He applies his passion for business and employers in his work as chairman of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce Employment Law & Litigation Committee, chapter labor counsel for the Associated Builders and Contractors of Illinois, chapter labor counsel for the Northern Illinois Building Contractors Association, and chapter labor counsel to the Finishing Contractors Association of Illinois.

As co-chair of the firm's expansive management-side Labor and Employment Service Group, Jeff oversees a team providing comprehensive counsel to employers across the country. As a member of the firm's Executive Committee, Jeff helps to set the strategic vision for the firm and ensures that each of the firm's clients receives the best possible experience working with Amundsen Davis.

Experience

Successfully Established a New Business Plan for a General Contractor to Utilize Both Union and Non-Union Subcontractors

Secured a Restraining Order and Injunction against a School District for Unfairly Trying to Sway Construction Work Away From a Non-Union Contractor

Secured a Reversal of the New Jersey Department of Labor's 7-Figure Tax Assessment Against a National Publishing Company's Business Model

Obtained Dismissal of a Class Action Illinois Biometric Information Act Complaint Filed Against a Manufacturer

Secured a Victory for Multiple Chicago Area Road Contractors Pursuant to the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act

Defeated a Laborer Local Union in its Organizing Efforts Directed at a Nursing Home

Obtained an Arbitration Award Denying a Former Sales Person's Claim of \$500,000 in Unpaid Commissions and Interest

Represented a Contractor in an Ownership Dispute over Equipment the Client Purchased

Helps a National Multi-Line Insurance Company With Multiple Areas of Representation and Business Operations

Successfully Defended a Construction Contractor under the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act

Won a Motion to Dismiss in a Common Law Retaliatory Discharge Case Under the Workers' Compensation Act

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Contractor & Contingent Workforce

Traditional Labor & Union Relations

Unfair Competition Counseling & Litigation

Vaccine Mandates in the Workplace

Wage & Hour

Workers' Compensation

Workplace Investigations

EDUCATION

University of Tulsa College of Law, J.D., 1998, *highest honors*

Illinois State University, B.S., 1994

ADMISSIONS

Illinois

Oklahoma

Defended Family-Owned Automotive Group Against Attempt to Unionize

Obtained a Temporary Restraining Order and Favorable Settlement for a Sales Company in Claims Based on Improper Solicitation of Clients

Successfully Obtained a Denial of Motion for Class Certification in a Contentious Wage and Hour Class Action Lawsuit for Major Health Care Group

Represented an International Direct Sales Business in a Suit for Breach of Restrictive Covenant and Nondisclosure Agreements

Represented a National Food Processing Company in a Key Union Contract Negotiation

Obtained a Preliminary Injunction on Behalf of a School Photography Company Against a Competitor in Violation of Restrictive Covenant Agreement

Obtained Summary Judgment Dismissal for Manufacturer on Racial Bias Claims under Title VII and Section 1981

Represents Construction Clients in Defense of Petitions for Enforcement Administrative Subpoenas Under Prevailing Wage Act

Successfully Represented Two Separate Franchise Owners against Union Organizing Petitions

Defended the Interests of Temporary Staffing Agencies in a Case Brought by the Illinois Attorney General's Antitrust Division

Successfully Represented a Concrete Manufacturer against Laborers' Organizing Petition

Managed Successive Campaigns to Avert Unionization of Warehouse Employees of a Food Manufacturer

Managed a St. Louis Auto Dealer's Campaign Against Union Petition

Secured Judgment for a Regional Banking Client Accused of Terminating an Employee After She Applied for and Took VESSA Leave

Successfully Filed Numerous Unfair Labor Practice Charges Against Unions Unlawful Picketing Activities at Construction Sites

Defended a Civil Engineering Firm Against Qui Tam False Claims Act Suit

Defended an Engineering and Manufacturing Industry Client Accused of Terminating an Employee Because of Her Race

Obtained a Summary Judgment Dismissal in Favor of High Profile Clients Accused of Tortiously Causing a New Business to Suffer \$25M in Alleged "Lost Profits" and an Additional \$75M in Other Damages

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Secured Dismissal for Construction Contractor in a Contentious False Claims Act Claim

Obtained Denial of Motion for Class Certification in a Wage and Hour Class Action Lawsuit Brought By Home Health Care Workers

Defended Manufacturer Against Attempt to Unionize Laborers

Handled Labor Negotiations for Food Processing Client in a Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement

Membership & Involvement

- Amundsen Davis Executive Committee
- Illinois Chamber of Commerce: Chair, Employment Law Council; Chair, Employment Litigation Committee; Chair, Employment Law Committee; Lead Attorney, HR Audit Task Force; Board Member
- Chapter Labor Attorney, National Labor Advisory Board: Associated Builders & Contractors of Illinois
- Chapter Labor Counsel, Member: Northern Illinois Building Contractors Association
- Chapter Labor Counsel, Member: Finishing Contractors Association of Illinois
- Board Member and Legislative Committee Chair: Illinois Fox Valley Society for Human Resource Management (IL Fox Valley SHRM)
- Member: Illinois State Bar Association; Oklahoma Bar Association; HR Illinois Advisory Board; Valley Industrial Human Resource Association
- Labor Law Advisor: Midwest Truckers Association; Illinois Lumber and Material Dealers Association

Honors

- Selected to the Illinois Super Lawyers list: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
- Selected to *The Best Lawyers in America*® in Employment Law - Management: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
- Selected to the "Top 100: Illinois Super Lawyers" list: 2017, 2018
- Recognized as "40 Illinois Attorney Under 40 to Watch" by the Law Bulletin: 2010
- Selected to the Illinois Super Lawyers "Rising Stars" list: 2012
- Selected by the Leading Lawyers Network as a "Leading Lawyer" in management side employment law

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Firm News

105 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Recognized by Best Lawyers® in 2024 in America
Firm News, August 17, 2023

Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included in the 2023 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars List
Firm News, *Amundsen Davis*, January 23, 2023

43 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers in America*© 2023
Firm News, August 18, 2022

30 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included on 2022 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 28, 2022

35 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers in America*© 2022
August 19, 2021

27 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included on 2021 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 29, 2021

31 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Recognized in *Best Lawyers in America*© 2021
August 20, 2020

24 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included on 2020 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 29, 2020

Jeff Risch Quoted in *Cook County Record*: Comptroller's order on prevailing wage a political move
Cook County Record, August 29, 2019

20 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Named to *Best Lawyers in America*© 2020
August 15, 2019

29 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included on 2019 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 24, 2019

15 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included in Best Lawyers in America© 2019
August 15, 2018

U.S. News & World Report – Best Lawyers® “Best Law Firms” 2018
November 1, 2017

12 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included in Best Lawyers in America© 2018
August 15, 2017

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27 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included on 2017 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists

SmithAmundsen, January 13, 2017

U.S. News – Best Lawyers® “Best Law Firms” 2017

Seven SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included in Best Lawyers in America© 2017
August 15, 2016

Mid-West Truckers Association Honors Jeff Risch as an Outstanding Member of the Year

Mid-West Truckers Association, Inc., February 9, 2016

28 SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included on 2016 Illinois Super Lawyers and 2016 Illinois Rising Stars Lists

SmithAmundsen, January 8, 2016

U.S. News – Best Lawyers® “Best Law Firms” 2016

Why Medical Marijuana Can Still Get You Fired in Illinois - The Chicago Tribune Mentions Jeff Risch

Chicago Tribune, August 21, 2015

Five SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included in *Best Lawyers in America*© 2016
August 17, 2015

Illinois Super Lawyers & Illinois Rising Stars Names 26 SmithAmundsen Attorneys to 2015 List

January 12, 2015

Five SmithAmundsen Attorneys Included in Best Lawyers in America© 2015
August 2014

Illinois Super Lawyers & Illinois Rising Stars Names 19 SmithAmundsen Attorneys to 2013 List

January 3, 2013

In the Media

Jeff Risch Joins WTTW's *Chicago Tonight* to Discuss the Workers' Rights Amendment

Union Attys See NLRB Partnerships As Boon For Workers – *Law360* Article Quotes Jeff Risch

Prevailing Wage Order Leaves Questions for Businesses -- Jeff Risch Quoted in *The Center Square*

Prevailing Wage Law -- *Cook County Record* Quotes Jeff Risch

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Jeff Risch Quoted in *Los Angeles Times* Article, "How Will The Workplace Change Under Trump? Here Are Some Clues"

Jeff Risch Quoted in *Chicago Tribune* Article, "How Will the Workplace Change Under Trump? Here Are a Few Clues, Issues"

Jeff Risch Quoted in Chicago Tribune Article about Job Issues to Look Out for in 2016

Banning 'the box' to give ex-convicts a better chance at finding a job - PBS NewsHour Interviews Jeff Risch

Employers Under the Gun - Daily Herald Business Ledger Features Jeff Risch

Have Gun, Will Carry - Jeff Risch Quoted in Illinois CPA Society's *Insight Magazine*

Concealed Carry Or Not, Business Owners Seek Guidance On What To Do Now

Concealed Carry: Businesses Face a Loaded Issue Over Concealed Carry Law - Chicago Tribune Quotes Jeff Risch

Alerts

OSHA'S COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate is Back on!

Federal Contractors' Alert: What We Know and Still Don't Know About Biden's Vaccination Mandate

NEW Illinois Law Limiting the Use of Criminal Convictions: How it Impacts Hiring in the Transportation Industry

Illinois Department of Labor Launches Prevailing Wage Electronic Database - April 1, 2020

Families First Coronavirus Response Act: What It Means For Employers

New Illinois Law Requiring Vehicle Expense Reimbursement Impacts All Transportation Employers

Strike4Democracy's National Day of Action and the Impact on the Workplace

Urgent Update Re DOL's Persuader Rule

Urgent Alert: U.S. DOL Publishes Final Overtime Rule

Speaking Engagements

Amundsen Davis's Leadership & Management Certification Training Series Event, Webcast

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Understanding New Paid Leave Mandates & One Day Rest in Seven Act Updates
Speaking Engagement, Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Seminar; Naperville, IL,
November 1, 2023

New Federal Davis-Beacon Rule Changes and New IL Statutory Changes for 2023
and Beyond
Speaking Engagement, Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Webcast, October 18,
2023

New Illinois Paid Leave Act
Speaking Engagement, Mid-West Truckers Association, Webcast, October 5, 2023

Hiring, Firing, & Documentation
Event, Associated Builders and Contractors of Illinois; Elk Grove, IL, October 3,
2023

Webinar on new NLRB Unionizing Rule
Speaking Engagement, Associated Builders and Contractors of Illinois; Webcast,
September 8, 2023

Illinois' Day and Temporary Labor Services Act – 2023 Safety & Training Mandates
Event, Amundsen Davis; Webcast, August 28, 2023

Latest Local, State & Federal Legal Developments that HR Must Know
Speaking Engagement, Central Illinois HR Conference; Bloomington, IL, August
24, 2023

Illinois' New Paid Leave Law: Updating Your Paid Leave Policy to Comply with
New Illinois Paid Leave Law Mandates
Speaking Engagement, Illinois Manufacturers' Association, Webcast, August 15,
2023

Prevailing Wage Fundamentals
Speaking Engagement, Lorman; Webcast, July 28, 2023

Published Works

Conducting the Employment Practices Audit 2023 Edition
Publication, *Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education*, 2023

Illinois' New Paid Leave Mandate Impacting All Manufacturing Workers
Publication, *The Illinois Manufacturer Magazine*, May 2023

Politicians Aim To Force Unionization In The Private Sector
The Illinois Manufacturer Magazine, August 2, 2021

New HR Laws Impacting Illinois Manufacturers
The Illinois Manufacturer Magazine, April 30, 2021

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Illinois Employment Forms-Online Version
Illinois Chamber of Commerce, March 2021

Model Employee Policies for Illinois Employees – 3rd Edition
Illinois Chamber of Commerce, 2021

Conducting the Employment Practices Audit 2020 Edition
Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education, 2020

Illinois Employment Law Handbook - 5th Edition
Illinois Chamber of Commerce, 2019

Illinois Employment Law Handbook, 4th Edition
Illinois Chamber of Commerce, 2016

Blog Posts

Illinois to Allow Workers to Sue Their Employers for Prevailing Wage Violations --- Even When the Employer Doesn't Have Notice that the IL Prevailing Wage Act Applies
Labor & Employment Law Update, October 4, 2023

Illinois is Expanding its Prevailing Wage Law *Yet Again*: Power Washing "Things" Will Soon Be Covered
Labor & Employment Law Update, September 22, 2023

More Legal Mandates & Changes Impacting the U.S. Construction Industry: Department of Labor's Updated Davis-Bacon & Related Acts FINAL RULE is Effective October 23, 2023
Labor & Employment Law Update, September 19, 2023

The Attack on Employer Free Speech Continues to Grow --- More States Enact Laws to Muzzle Employers on Educating their Employees on the Good, Bad and Ugly of Unionization
Labor & Employment Law Update, September 7, 2023

Illinois Green Lights Further Expansion of its Notorious Prevailing Wage Law: All Work Related to Traffic Light and Street Light Poles Regardless of Public Funding is Now Covered!?!
Labor & Employment Law Update, September 6, 2023

BREAKING NEWS! NLRB Makes It Much Easier For Unions to Represent Employees By Forcing Employers to Recognize A Union Under Certain Circumstances
Labor & Employment Law Update, August 25, 2023

Illinois Extends Prevailing Wage Mandates to ALL Work Performed on Illinois Solar Projects!
Labor & Employment Law Update, August 23, 2023

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California PAGA Claims Are NOT Subject to Arbitration and Remain Available for Class Action Lawsuits

Labor & Employment Law Update, July 18, 2023

Illinois Continues to Expand its Prevailing Wage Law: Removing & Disposing of Community “Poop” to a Private “Toilet” is Now Covered!?!

Labor & Employment Law Update, July 12, 2023

It’s Now Official --- A Union Worker’s BIPA Claims are Subject to Federal Labor Law Preemption

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 27, 2023

Breaking News: Union Membership Rate Drops to Historic Low in 2022

Labor & Employment Law Update, January 24, 2023

Big Labor Continues to Target the Financial Industry

Labor & Employment Law Update, December 21, 2022

Illinois’ “Workers’ Rights” Amendment: What is it?

Labor & Employment Law Update, October 24, 2022

Bidding On Green Energy Construction Projects? Watch Out For Prevailing Wage and PLA Landmines!

Labor & Employment Law Update, September 13, 2022

Illinois Department of Labor Posts Equal Pay Act Registration Certificate Compliance Statement Sample and FAQ’s

Labor & Employment Law Update, April 27, 2022

“Treat Employees Like Mushrooms?” – NLRB’s Attack on Employer “Captive Audience Meetings” is Officially On!

Labor & Employment Law Update, April 11, 2022

Big Labor is Targeting Banks and Credit Unions??

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 21, 2022

Federal Judge Finds Periodic Inspection and Testing of Fire or Security Systems Does Not Fall Under the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act

Labor & Employment Law Update, February 24, 2022

OSHA’S COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate is Back on!

Labor & Employment Law Update, December 20, 2021

Illinois Prevailing Wage Pay Data Now Online for Anyone to View and “Complain”

Labor & Employment Law Update, December 13, 2021

EMPLOYERS BEWARE: PRO-UNION PRIORITIES ADVANCE AT THE NLRB

Labor & Employment Law Update, October 25, 2021

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Federal Contractors' Alert: What We Know and Still Don't Know About Biden's Vaccination Mandate

Labor & Employment Law Update, September 27, 2021

NEED AN HR AUDIT CHECKLIST? HERE YOU GO!

Labor & Employment Law Update, June 16, 2021

IDOL on the PROWL: Looking At Non-Union Contractors to Debar for Technical Violations of the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act

Labor & Employment Law Update, May 7, 2021

Construction Contractors Beware: Think Twice Before Paying Prevailing Wage Assessments!

Labor & Employment Law Update, April 2, 2021

NEW ILLINOIS LAW PROHIBITS USE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS: Guide for Employers and Sample Forms

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 24, 2021

Will Employers Have to Give 1% of their Total Gross Profits to the State of Illinois? Gov. Pritzker Signs into Law Unprecedented Changes to IL Equal Pay and Corporate Laws

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 23, 2021

PREVAILING WAGE REMINDER: Local, State and Federal Prevailing Wage Obligations Vary Greatly

Labor & Employment Law Update, February 25, 2021

Illinois Set to Enact New Law Limiting Criminal Convictions in Employment Decisions

Labor & Employment Law Update, February 15, 2021

SAMPLE Questionnaire and HR Checklist for Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

Labor & Employment Law Update, November 6, 2020

Illinois Department of Labor Launches Prevailing Wage Electronic Database – April 1, 2020

Labor & Employment Law Update, April 13, 2020

UPDATE – Does a “Shelter-in-Place” or “Stay-at-Home” Order Trigger Paid Sick Leave under the FFCRA?

Labor & Employment Law Update, April 6, 2020

Families First Coronavirus Response Act: What It Means For Employers

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 15, 2020

AFL-CIO Sues NLRB Seeking to Block 2019 Final Election Rule

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 9, 2020

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NLRB Gives Gift To Employers: Modifies Obama Board's "Quickie Election" Rule
Labor & Employment Law Update, December 16, 2019

BREAKING NEWS: Illinois Recreational Cannabis Law Protections for Employers & the Workplace Clarified!
Labor & Employment Law Update, November 15, 2019

State Comptroller Wants to Enforce the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act???
Labor & Employment Law Update, August 16, 2019

SB 75: NEW Anti-Harassment Law – A Serious Game Changer for Illinois Employers
Labor & Employment Law Update, August 9, 2019

In Case it was Ever in Doubt, the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act Now Expressly Adopts UNION SCALE to Establish Prevailing Wage in the "Construction" Industry
Labor & Employment Law Update, June 18, 2019

Up in Smoke: Recreational Marijuana and its Impact on the Illinois Workplace
Labor & Employment Law Update, May 31, 2019

Prevailing Wage Law: An Effective Sword of Labor Unions to Hurt their Enemies in the Public Bid Process
Labor & Employment Law Update, April 25, 2019

Critical Illinois Prevailing Wage Law Change Impacting Contractors
Labor & Employment Law Update, February 26, 2019

Conducting an HR Audit for 2019
Labor & Employment Law Update, December 17, 2018

2017 Ending With A Bang: Obama Era NLRB "Micro Unit" Ruling Reversed
Labor & Employment Law Update, December 22, 2017

Strike4Democracy's National Day of Action and the Impact on the Workplace
Labor & Employment Law Update, February 16, 2017

URGENT UPDATE RE DOL'S PERSUADER RULE
Labor & Employment Law Update, June 24, 2016

URGENT ALERT: U.S. DOL PUBLISHES FINAL OVERTIME RULE
Labor & Employment Law Update, May 18, 2016

Temporary Staffing Agencies & User Companies Deemed "Joint Employers" By the NLRB
Labor & Employment Law Update, August 28, 2015

Urgent Alert: U.S. DOL Proposes Major Changes to Exempt Salary Status
Labor & Employment Law Update, June 30, 2015

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How Can Employers Reconcile the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations with Growing “Ban the Box” Laws?

Labor & Employment Law Update, April 8, 2015

The ‘Big Mac’ is Under Attack: Radical NLRB Labeling the Franchisor as “Joint Employer” of Franchisee Employees

Labor & Employment Law Update, August 8, 2014

“Ban the Box” Comes to Illinois: Employers Must Now Revise Hiring Practices and Employment Applications

Labor & Employment Law Update, July 15, 2014

New Pregnancy Protections Impacting ALL Illinois Employers!!

Labor & Employment Law Update, June 19, 2014

President Obama Directs United States Department of Labor to Revise Wage & Hour Law

Labor & Employment Law Update, March 13, 2014

NLRB Reissues Proposed “Quickie Election” Rule: Non-Union Employers Must Be Prepared

Labor & Employment Law Update, February 5, 2014

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