Workplace Investigations

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14. When does privilege attach to investigation materials?



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If a lawyer is involved in the investigation, communication between the lawyer and client is subject to legal professional privilege. These communications must not be disclosed. Any documents collected by an internal audit can be seized and used. However, a document created by a lawyer can only be seized. The same applies to other professional representatives of parties, such as notaries and auditors, as potential holders of professional secrecy.

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The privilege of investigation materials concerns a rather limited amount of cases. In practice, materials may be considered privileged in connection with the litigation process under the Procedural Code (4/1734). For example, communications between a client and an attorney may attract protection against forcible public disclosure.

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