

OUR PRACTICE

Labor & Employment

Baker Donelson's labor and employment attorneys are dedicated to helping our clients manage their workforces. Our clients benefit from an integrated and experienced team of professionals who assist in every aspect of an organization's employment-related legal needs. When it comes to a company's most valuable asset – its employees – our labor and employment attorneys are committed to counseling and advocating for employers every step of the way.

We work alongside our clients by offering employee policy analysis and drafting, compliance audits, management training, labor negotiation, pre-litigation strategies to reduce legal risks, and litigation defense for administrative and court proceedings at the federal and state levels. We take pride in being responsive to our clients and developing a genuine understanding of their needs and business goals.

Our team of more than 85 attorneys serves clients throughout North America from the Firm's offices in 11 states and Washington, D.C. In the last three years, our team members have tried more than 600 federal court cases, appeared in the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, Eleventh, and District of Columbia Courts of Appeal, and appeared in 31 district courts as well as the District of Columbia.

Human Resources Services

Clients call on our attorneys to conduct human resource audits and develop training programs for supervisors and managers. Topics include workplace harassment prevention, leave management, union avoidance, employee engagement and retention, reductions in force, drafting compliant policies, negotiating and drafting c-suite executive employment agreements, and more. We offer mock trials, case studies, role-playing, and tailored trainings for human resources managers, mid-level managers, and front-line supervisors. We incorporate tools that bring training to life and give managers an opportunity to problem-solve and collaborate with their peers to solve some of their most common and toughest workplace challenges.

Compliance

Clients look to Baker Donelson to ensure their compliance with employment-related laws and regulations such as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Equal Pay Act, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN), Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, and the myriad of corresponding state and municipal laws. Members of our team regularly advise on a full range of workplace compliance issues, including immigration, affirmative action, leave and disability, wage and hour, workplace safety, employee benefits, workplace and data privacy, employee discipline, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, discharge and restructuring, workers' compensation, reduction in force, union organizing, collective bargaining, and other issues.

Workplace and Government Investigations

We have deep experience conducting workplace investigations involving a wide range of allegations of employee wrongdoing, including harassment and discrimination and employee fraud and embezzlement, and have done so for small businesses and Fortune 500 companies alike. In some cases, the best defense may be for a client to conduct its own internal investigation, and in those instances, our attorneys coach clients on how to do so most effectively. In other cases, or we conduct the investigations ourselves and provide comprehensive reports on our findings.

When clients face investigations by government agencies, including the Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), or Federal Trade Commission (FTC), we work with them to navigate the complexities and to limit their exposure. We excel in organizing the best way to respond to warrants and subpoenas and prepare employees for interviews with government investigators. We also work with our clients to craft a well-organized document production process, often in unanticipated situations with tight deadlines.

Litigation Services

While we work hard to help our clients avoid litigation, should it occur, our first objective is to gain a clear understanding of our clients' goals. Relying upon our extensive courtroom experience, we defend the allegations levied against our clients, such as employment-related tort actions and claims of wrongful discharge or unlawful discrimination. We represent clients before the DOL, NLRB, and the EEOC, among other regulatory bodies. If our client's goal is to resolve the matter quickly, we are experienced in mediation and negotiation of settlement terms that enable us to conclude the matters effectively and efficiently.

Protecting Your Company's Trade Secrets, Relationships, and Goodwill

We work with our clients to develop comprehensive programs to minimize the risk of trade secret theft, unfair competition, breach of fiduciary duties and restrictive covenants, and other unethical business practices by current or former employees. Protecting a business's competitive advantage requires a pragmatic approach and a diverse legal toolkit that begins with strategic thought long before an employee is hired. With careful planning and deployment of the right tools at the right times for your business, most violations and harms can be prevented or significantly reduced. Our labor and employment attorneys are experienced in drafting restrictive covenant agreements that comply with applicable laws, including non-competition, non-solicitation, non-recruitment, and non-disclosure agreements; drafting policies and advising on best practices for protecting confidential, proprietary, and trade secret information; and establishing business property and data security protocols to protect against misappropriation, disclosure, and misuse of valuable assets. We collaborate with attorneys across practice areas – including corporate/business, intellectual property, and cybersecurity – to provide solutions tailored to our clients' business and industry-specific needs.

These measures also ensure that, when a violation or breach occurs and legal action is necessary, a solid foundation for enforcement has been established. Our litigation teams are prepared to swiftly gather and analyze evidence (which often includes electronic data and metadata), secure forensic examinations and experts, and seek appropriate damages and injunctive relief, including temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions until permanent relief can be obtained. We represent our clients in claims under applicable state laws and under federal laws such as the Defend Trade Secrets Act, Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, and Stored Communications Act.

We also assist our clients in evaluating their ability to hire candidates from competitors, navigating any legal or contractual parameters that may apply, and formulating best practices for properly onboarding and managing employees. Our attorneys advise our clients on how to avoid creating legal conflicts and, where unavoidable, how to conduct their business so that their position is defensible.

Inclusivity

We know our clients seek strategic counsel in creating a sustainable climate of inclusivity in the workplace. We partner with them on the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) impact of business decisions by assessing their goals, culture, and priorities to identify areas of opportunity. We create, evaluate, and maintain Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plans and initiatives; conduct audits and surveys to evaluate workplace culture; and develop robust professional development training curricula. Our labor and employment lawyers address legal risk at all stages and provide best practices for creating sustainable inclusive workplace climates.



Case Studies

- Victory for Pro Bono Client in Immigration Case - Immigration