



Lauren S. Novak

Partner, Deputy Practice Group Leader, Labor and Employment
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Overview

With experience both in private practice and as in-house counsel for a labor union, Lauren has the unique ability to see both sides of a case. In addition, she has a deep and well-rounded understanding of all areas of labor and employment law.

Lauren represents management on issues related to collective bargaining relationships and labor disputes, including formulation of bargaining strategies, contract administration, maintenance of operations during labor disputes, and responses to “corporate” campaigns.

Clients facing litigation turn to Lauren for her insights in handling discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and wage and hour complaints in federal and state court, as well as labor arbitrations and matters before the NLRB, EEOC, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission and other state and federal agencies.

When it comes to employment counseling, clients turn to Lauren for her experience with all aspects of employment matters including internal investigations, employee disciplines, wage and hour, and leaves of absence. She frequently serves as counsel to in-house attorneys and human resources executives on policies and procedures, non-compete agreements, hiring and terminations, reductions in force, employment contracts, settlement agreement, and severance matters. In addition, Lauren also handles OSHA compliance and investigations.

Lauren is at the forefront of Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA), providing compliance counseling to businesses and representing companies facing litigation.

With the increased focus on sexual harassment in the workplace, the firm has launched the Workforce Investigations Team to assist clients with investigations, compliance, and resolution. Lauren is a founding member of WIT and has decades of experience assisting clients in this area.

Lauren has advised clients across a diverse range of industries, including food and beverage, automotive, construction, gaming, manufacturing, outsourcing, education, telecommunications, and staffing services, including security staffing. She frequently represents private and family owned businesses and family offices.

She is an elected member of the Chicago Bar Association Board of Managers and is the former Co-Chair of the Executive Committee of the Chicago Bar Association Alliance for Women.

Practices

- Labor and Employment
- Employment Litigation
- Litigation and Dispute Resolution
- Compliance and Counseling
- Management-Union Relations
- Trade Secrets, Noncompete and Restrictive Covenant Agreements
- Cybersecurity and Data Privacy
- ERISA Litigation
- Family Office Services

Industries

- Automotive
- Construction
- Consumer Products and Services
- Educational Institutions
- Food and Beverage
- Manufacturing

Experience

- Played a critical role in defending a global electronics products company against claims filed by a former female sales executive who filed multiple internal complaints, agency charges and an arbitration demand alleging sex discrimination and retaliation. After a six-day arbitration hearing, a final award was issued in favor of the client.
- Represented employers in dozens of labor arbitrations, including the recent representation of a manufacturer in dismissal of a grievance.
- Successfully represented multiple clients to obtain the dismissal of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation lawsuits filed in federal and state court through summary judgment.
- Lead negotiator in numerous collective bargaining negotiations.

Credentials

Education

- IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law, J.D., 2007
Labor and Employment Certificate
- George Washington University, B.A., Political Science, 2004

Bar Admissions

- Illinois
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (Trial Bar)

Professional Memberships

- American Bar Association
- Chicago Bar Association, Board of Managers
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, Fellow (2020)

Insights

08.10.2020

Alert

DOJ's Big Reveal on How to Avoid Corporate Criminal Prosecutions

08.04.2020

In The News

Novak Quoted on Employer Discipline for Workers' Social Media Posts

07.23.2020

Event

Tips and Tricks to Succeed as an Associate

07.13.2020

Blog Post

Stay Home, Chicago: Emergency Order Requires Travelers from High-Risk States to Quarantine

07.06.2020
In The News
Novak Quoted on How Employers Handle Employee Expression

05.19.2020
Blog Post
Good News for Companies: Seventh Circuit Holds Removal of Plaintiffs' Biometrics Privacy Claims to Federal Court OK

05.14.2020
Event
Come on In!?! Managing the Risks of Opening Your Business to the Public

05.12.2020
Blog Post
To Terminate or Not to Terminate? How PPP Loans Impact Termination Considerations for Employers Seeking Loan Forgiveness

04.13.2020
In The News
Novak Quoted on Essential Employee Protections During Coronavirus Pandemic

04.09.2020
Blog Post
COVID-19 Workplace Safety: Tips for Employers with Essential Employees

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Other Publications

- ERISA Fiduciary Answer Book Sixth Edition (2015) and Supplement (2016), *Multiemployer Plans* chapter author, Wolters Kluwer

Speeches & Presentations

- "Tips and Tricks to Succeed as an Associate," (panelist) The Chicago Bar Association, Webinar (Jul. 23, 2020)
- "Come on In!?! Managing the Risks of Opening Your Business to the Public," DRI Retail and Hospitality Committee, Webinar (May 14, 2020)
- "Navigating Motherhood and Your Legal Career," 2nd Annual Working Women's Legal Summit, The Chicago Bar Association, Chicago, Ill. (Mar. 6, 2020)
- "The Nuts and Bolts of Labor Arbitration," The Chicago Bar Association's 2019 Arbitration Institute, Chicago, Ill. (Nov. 4, 2019)
- "Updates on Significant Changes in State Law," USLFG Labor & Employment Committee, Los Angeles, Calif. (Sep. 26, 2019)
- "Working Women's Legal Summit," The Chicago Bar Association, Chicago, Ill. (Mar. 8, 2019)
- "Ethical Issues Facing In-House Lawyers," (speaker) Women's Bar Association of Illinois, In-House Counsel Committee, Chicago, Ill. (Nov. 5, 2018)
- "Investigating Sexual Harassment Allegations," Association of Inspectors Generals Fall 2018 Training Conference, Chicago, Ill. (Oct. 25, 2018)
- "Women in Leadership: Women Helping Women," (speaker) Chicago Bar Association's Alliance for Women Annual Kick-off Reception (Oct. 9, 2018)
- "Sexual Harassment Training for Employers," (speaker) Schiff Hardin Webinar (Sept. 10, 2018)
- "Women on Top: How to Be a Changemaker" (speaker) CBA Alliance for Women, the South Asian Bar Association Women's Committee, and the Asian American Bar Association of Chicago (Mar. 27, 2018)
- "New Laws and Lessons for Employers After Trump's First 100 Days," (co-presenter) Schiff Hardin Podcast (May 11, 2017)
- "A New Administration: What's In Store for Employers," (speaker) Schiff Hardin Webinar (Dec. 13, 2016)
- "Be in Compliance: Understanding If & How the New Overtime Rules Apply to Your Organization," Housing Action Illinois - 2016 Housing Matters Conference, Bloomington, Ill. (Oct. 27, 2016)
- "The Intersection of Education and Labor: Practicing before the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board," YLS Education Law and Labor & Employee Committees, Chicago Bar Association, Chicago, Ill. (Mar. 29, 2012)
- "Developing Accurate and Legally Defensible Job Descriptions: When Was the Last Time Your Job Descriptions Were Updated?" YLS Education Law Committee Meeting, Chicago Bar Association, Chicago, Ill. (Oct. 14, 2010)

AWARDS & HONORS

- **Emerging Lawyer (2020)**
Law Bulletin Publishing Company's *Leading Lawyers*
- **Emerging Lawyer (2019)**
Law Bulletin Publishing Company's *Leading Lawyers*
- **Emerging Lawyer (2018)**
Law Bulletin Publishing Company's *Leading Lawyers*
- **Emerging Lawyer (2017)**
Law Bulletin Publishing Company's *Leading Lawyers*
- **Illinois Rising Star (2017)**
Thomson Reuters' *Illinois Super Lawyers*
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