



Courtney Blanchard

Attorney & Chair, Labor & Employment

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Biography

As a Shareholder, Courtney represents and advises a variety of employers, from nationwide companies with thousands of employees to homegrown Minnesota businesses and non-profits. She has successfully litigated sophisticated wage-and-hour class cases, conducted sensitive workplace investigations, and advised employers on complex employment issues. In particular, Courtney specializes in working with employers to develop practical time off policies, accounting for the ever-evolving landscape of sick and safe leave and paid family and medical leave.

Courtney's experience as a former crime and court reporter has given her an outsider's perspective of the court system and honed her writing skills. She is a fierce advocate for her clients, delivering strong arguments and practical advice under the pressure of demanding deadlines.

Education

William Mitchell College of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2014

University of Minnesota, B.A., *magna cum laude*, Journalism, 2007

Bar Admissions

Minnesota

U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota

Key Practice Experience

- FLSA/Wage-and-hour defense
- Appellate practice
- Class and complex litigation strategy
- Leave of absence and disability advising and defense
- Sick and safe leave, paid family and medical leave, and fair workweek laws
- EEOC class investigation and litigation defense
- Discrimination defense
- Preventive employment counseling
- Whistleblower/retaliation defense
- Administrative agency charge responses
- Reductions in force

COVID-19 Related Employment Expertise

- FFCRA compliance
- Federal and state sick leave, FMLA
- California's WARN Act
- Workplace Safety
- CARES Act
- Unemployment

Key Industry Experience

- Technology
- Retail
- Healthcare
- Education
- Non-profit
- Hospitality
- Restaurant/Food Service
- Manufacturing

Representative Matters

- *Spanish v. Dental Health Products, Inc.*: Successfully obtained dismissal of all counts on summary judgment in federal court, including six-figure unpaid wage claim.
- *Moldenhauer v. Honeywell, Inc.*: Defended Honeywell against nationwide class action alleging age discrimination and Equal Pay Act violations. Plaintiff agreed to dismiss the class claims and accept a confidential individual settlement.
- *LaPointe, et al v. Target Corporation*: Interviewed putative class members to develop comprehensive defense against a statewide New York Labor Law misclassification case. Prevailed on a partial motion to dismiss, after which Plaintiff agreed to accept a confidential individual settlement and dismiss the class claims.
- *Locicero, et al. v. Target Corporation*: Defended Target against a nationwide FLSA misclassification Assistant Store Manager case. The Plaintiffs accepted individual initial offers of judgment and dismissed their nationwide FLSA collective action claims.
- Successfully obtained dismissal of dozens of administrative charges alleging violations of state and federal civil rights laws on behalf of national companies in the healthcare, retail, restaurant, and fitness industries.
- Defended employers in EEOC proceedings alleging class claims of discrimination based upon conduct of criminal background
- Represented small business through successful resolution of wage-and-hour class
- Conducted successful “Pick Up Stix” campaign in connection with alleged tip-pooling class against Minnesota restaurant with multiple locations.

Counseling

- Advised nationwide employers on issues related to leave and accommodation, hiring practices, background checks, anti-discrimination policies, and termination.
- Drafted comprehensive time off policies for nationwide employers, including multi-jurisdiction sick and safe leave, unlimited/flexible PTO, and paid parental leave policies.
- Conducted sensitive workplace investigations, including complaints involving executive-level employees.
- Represented and counseled employer during wage-and-hour audit by the United States Department of Labor.

Recognitions and Honors

- Recognized by *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America*, 2022-2024, Labor and Employment
- Selected to Minnesota *Rising Stars* list, 2019 – 2023
- Judicial Extern to the Honorable John R. Tunheim
- Law Clerk to the Honorable Matthew E. Johnson
- Outstanding Young Iowa Journalist Award
- CALI, William Mitchell College of Law
- Finalist for Burton Award for Excellence in Legal Writing, William Mitchell College of Law
- *William Mitchell Law Review*

Publications and Presentations

- DRI Employment Law Compendium, Minnesota New Laws for 2019 & 2020

- “Over Yonder: A National Perspective to Sick and Safe Leave,” ALFA Labor & Employment Seminar, June 13, 2019
- “Employment-Related Issues for Restaurants, Breweries, & Franchises,” Minnesota CLE Business Law Institute, May 7, 2019
- “Employee Handbooks & Policies: What to Include and How to Communicate,” Minnesota CLE Employment A to Z Webcast Series, January 22, 2019
- “Ethics and Conflicts Issues in Restrictive Covenant Litigation,” Minnesota CLE Trade Secrets and Restrictive Covenants: Protecting Assets and Litigating Disputes Seminar, February 20, 2018

Professional Associations

- Minnesota State Bar Association
- Minnesota Chapter, Federal Bar Association
- Minnesota Women Lawyers
- Defense Research Institute (DRI)

Community Engagement

- Children’s Law Center, volunteer attorney