



## Sandra L. Jezierski

**Attorney**

**Contact:**

Phone: 612.305.7547

Email: [sjezierski@nilanjohnson.com](mailto:sjezierski@nilanjohnson.com)

### Biography

Sandra is a Shareholder and defends major employment disputes for multinational companies. She has successfully tried numerous cases to complete defense verdicts both in court and through arbitration involving gender, disability, race, and religious discrimination, retaliation, defamation, and state and federal whistleblower claims. In addition to her trial experience, Sandra routinely achieves summary judgment for her clients in federal and state court and in arbitration.

She also provides her clients with advice, counseling, and investigative services for claims of sexual harassment and other sensitive workplace matters involving employees at all levels of the organization.

Sandra's devotion to learning the complexities of her clients' organizational structures, industries, and internal procedures make her a genuine business partner. She prides herself in quickly responding to client needs and navigating them through tough litigation with as little disruption as possible.

### Key Practice Experience

- Discrimination defense
- Whistleblower/False Claims Act defense
- Wage-and-hour litigation
- Sexual harassment defense
- Trials and arbitrations
- Advice, counseling and investigation of sexual harassment claims
- Leave of absence and disability advice/defense
- Non-compete and trade secret litigation
- Preventive employment counseling
- Workplace investigations
- Social media investigations
- Harassment and diversity training
- Drafting employment policies, contracts and procedures

### Key Industry Experience

- Retail
- Health Care
- Airline
- School District/Public

### Education

University of Minnesota Law School , J.D., *cum laude*, 1996

University of Minnesota, B.A., *summa cum laude*

### Bar Admissions

Minnesota State Courts

U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota

U.S. Court of Appeals (4th Circuit, 7th Circuit, 8th Circuit)

## Representative Matters

- *Olukayode v. UnitedHealth*, Obtained denial of conditional certification in an independent-contractor misclassification case involving at-the-elbow consultants. This matter is still in litigation.
- *Talton v. Bluestem Brands*, Hennepin County District Court. Defended Bluestem against race discrimination claims. Successfully tried the case before a jury and prevailed on all claims.
- Defended Fortune 15 company against claims of wrongful termination under the Minnesota Whistleblower Act and FMLA discrimination and retaliation before the AAA. Successfully tried the case to conclusion and prevailed on all claims.
- Defended Fortune 15 company against claims of FMLA, retaliation, and religious discrimination before the AAA. Successfully tried the case to conclusion and prevailed on all claims.
- Defended Fortune 15 company against claims of wrongful termination under the Minnesota Whistleblower Act before the AAA. Successfully tried the case to conclusion and prevailed on all claims
- Defended Fortune 15 company against disability discrimination and FMLA retaliation claims before the AAA. Successfully tried the case to conclusion and prevailed on all claims. Defeated claimant's motion to vacate arbitration award in United States District Court of Minnesota.
- *Thomas v. UnitedHealth Group*, United States District Court of Minnesota. Defended UnitedHealth Group against race discrimination and retaliation claims. Defendant's motion for summary judgment was granted in its entirety.
- Defended Fortune 25 company against disability discrimination claims before the AAA. Plaintiff voluntarily dismissed her complaint after Defendant filed its memorandum in support of its motion for summary judgment.
- Defended Fortune 25 company against disability discrimination claims before the AAA. Defendant's motion for summary judgment was granted in its entirety.
- Defended Fortune 25 company against disability discrimination claims before the AAA. Successfully tried the case to conclusion and prevailed on all claims.
- *Lehman v. UnitedHealth Group*, United States District Court of Minnesota. Defended UnitedHealth Group against age discrimination and retaliation claims. Defendant's Rule 12 motion to dismiss was granted in its entirety.
- *Wooters v. Thorpe Distributing Co.*, Hennepin County District Court. Defended Thorpe Distributing against sex discrimination and retaliation claims. Matter was settled under confidential terms after Defendant moved for summary judgment.
- *Johnson v. The Gap*, United States District Court of Minnesota. Defended The Gap against multi-plaintiff sexual harassment and gender discrimination claims. Matter was settled upon confidential terms during discovery.
- *Cruzan v. Special School District, No. 1*, United States District Court of Minnesota. Defended the Minneapolis Public School District against claims of religious discrimination. Obtained summary judgment on all claims. Defended appeal and argued before the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Summary judgment was affirmed.
- *Chial v. Sprint/United Management Co.*, United States District Court of Minnesota. Defended Sprint against whistleblower claims. Obtained summary judgment on all claims. Defended appeal and argued before the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Summary judgment was affirmed.
- *Anderson v. Target Corporation*, United States District Court of Minnesota. Defended Target Corporation against race discrimination claims. Obtained summary judgment on all claims. Defended appeal to the Eighth Circuit where summary judgment was affirmed.
- *Schutz v. Minneapolis Public School District*, Hennepin County District Court. Defended client against gender discrimination and sexual orientation discrimination claims. Resulted in a bench trial, received partial defense verdict.
- *Hulsey v. Minneapolis Public School District*, Hennepin County District Court. Defended client against allegations of violation of the Minnesota Drug Testing Statute. Successfully tried the case in front of a jury and prevailed on all but one claim.

## Recognitions and Honors

- White Belt Certification, Legal Lean Sigma and Project Management
- Listed in *Minnesota Super Lawyers*, 2015-2020

## **Recent Publications and Presentations**

- “Sexual Harassment Compliance and the #MeToo Era,” Minnesota CLE, 2018 Health Law Institute, June 14, 2018
- “Best Practices for Sexual Harassment Investigations in the Wake of #MeToo,” Minnesota CLE, 2018 Upper Midwest Employment Law Institute, May 21, 2018

## **Professional Associations**

- Minnesota Women Lawyers
- Hennepin County Bar Association
- Minnesota State Bar Association
- Federal Bar Association

## **Community Engagement**

- Delegate to United Nations Committee on Human Rights - Geneva
- Legal Specialist for ABA Central and East European Law Initiative in Kosovo
- Delegate to United Nations Fourth World Women’s Conference - Beijing