



Phyllis Karasov

Of Counsel

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Phyllis Karasov advises businesses on labor and employment matters. Her clients come from a variety of sectors, including construction, manufacturing, higher education, K-12 private education, nonprofit and healthcare. She provides counsel in all areas of human resources, including hiring, handbooks, regulatory compliance, discrimination, sexual harassment, discipline and termination, Americans with Disabilities Act, OSHA rules and the Family and Medical Leave Act. As a former National Labor Relations Board attorney, Phyllis is often called upon to represent clients in labor union matters including arbitrations, collective bargaining agreements and union contracts. In higher education, Phyllis is an experienced and trained investigator of Title IX complaints.

Representative Experience

Labor and Employment

Phyllis has substantial experience drafting, interpreting and enforcing noncompetition agreements, confidentiality agreements, and separation agreements. She also has deep experience developing and drafting employee handbooks and other types of employment documents and policies. She often represents clients before administrative agencies and in state and federal courts.

- Provided guidance to employers on the many issues that a rise with COVID-19, including interpretation and application of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act; the layoff of employees; mandatory COVID-19 testing; gubernatorial executive orders; drafting remote work policies; and government vaccine directives, including the OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard, the Federal Contractor Vaccination rule and the CMS Federal Vaccine Mandate Interim Final Rule.
- Represented employers in complaints of discrimination filed with Minnesota Department of Human Rights, St. Paul Department of Human Rights, Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
- Represented employers in state and federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) citations and administrative law hearing process, resulting in rescission of citations or significant reductions in the penalty or seriousness of the alleged violation.
- Represented a construction contractor in a jurisdictional dispute.

Services

- Education
- Employment and Labor Litigation
- Employment and Labor Law
- Investigations, Compliance and Training Including Title IX
- Litigation
- Nonprofit
- Construction and Surety

- Advised numerous employers on proper classification of workers as employees or independent contractors.
- Advised numerous employers on exempt and nonexempt status of employees and other FLSA issues.
- Negotiated collective bargaining agreements with various labor unions.
- Advised employers how to remain non-union or how to respond to a union organizing campaign.
- Advised employers on the discipline and termination of problem employees.
- Advised employers who are audited by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Education

Phyllis advises private independent schools and institutions of higher education in all aspects of their operation, including labor and employment law, student affairs, regulatory and compliance issues, campus security, employee benefits, tax exemption and governance, and volunteer issues.

- Negotiated collective bargaining agreements for faculty, custodial and trade bargaining units.
- Assisted several institutions in developing sexual harassment and sexual violence policies that conform to Title IX and other applicable state and federal regulations.
- Represented an institution of higher education in a faculty member's lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging sex discrimination.
- Drafted and negotiated employment contracts for administrators, including the president, chief financial officer, chief academic officer, and other highly placed executive administrators.
- Regularly advises private K-12 schools on student issues.
- Represented a K-12 school in a student complaint under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Represented several institutions in employee and student complaints filed with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

Nonprofit and Tax-Exempt Organizations

- Assisted an organization with governance issues.
- Assisted an organization undergoing turmoil with various employee issues.
- Assisted an organization with an early retirement incentive program, including drafting all associated legal and program documents.

Education

- Emory University School of Law (J.D.)
- University of Rochester (B.A., with distinction)

Bar/Court Admissions

- Minnesota
- Wisconsin
- United States Court of Appeals - 8th Circuit
- United States District Court - Minnesota

- Minnesota Supreme Court
- United States District Court - Georgia (Inactive)
- Georgia Supreme Court (Inactive)

Recognition

- Power List, Minnesota Lawyer, 2025
- MSBA Labor and Employment Law Section Leonard Lindquist Distinguished Practice Award, 2024
- Top Women in Law, Minnesota Lawyer, 2023
- Top Lawyers in Minnesota,® Minnesota Monthly, 2022
- Top 50 Women Lawyers, Super Lawyers magazine
- Super Lawyer®, Super Lawyers magazine
- Minnesota Leading Attorney, Leading American Attorneys
- Twin Cities Cardozo Society, Sidney Barrows Lifetime Commitment Award, 2014
- Minnesota State Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Specialist

Media

February 26, 2021

Does your employee handbook create an employee contract? The answer might surprise you!

November 30, 2018

E-Alert – City of Saint Paul Enacts Minimum Wage

October 23, 2018

Can an Employer Require that an Employee Who was Involved in a Work-Related Injury or Accident be Drug Tested?

September 18, 2018

NLRB Issues Proposed Rule on Joint Employer Status

June 29, 2018

Public Employees Cannot be Required to Pay Fair Share Fees

May 16, 2018

Judge Decides that the Minneapolis Sick and Safe Time Ordinance Does Not Apply to Employers Based Outside the City of Minneapolis

March 12, 2018

U.S. Department of Labor's Pilot FLSA Self-Audit Plan

March 2, 2018

Hy-Brand Decision Vacated as Joint Employer Liability Standard

December 19, 2017

National Labor Relations Board Reverses Three Obama-Era Policies

June 11, 2017

What the DOL's Rescission of Obama Administration Guidance Means for

Employers

April 18, 2017

Minneapolis, St. Paul Issue Sick and Safe Time Rules

October 6, 2016

Minneapolis City Council Passes Amendments to Sick and Safe Time Ordinance

September 13, 2016

New St. Paul Ordinance Guarantees Paid Sick and Safe Time Leave for Employees

July 20, 2016

New Minneapolis Ordinance Guarantees Paid Sick and Safe Time Leave for Employees

July 20, 2016

Drug and Alcohol Testing May be Considered Employer Retaliation

May 20, 2016

Employer Wellness Programs are Validated

October 21, 2015

It Can Be Done: An Employer's Challenge to an OSHA Citation was Recently Upheld by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals

October 1, 2015

New Executive Order Mandates Paid Sick Leave for Employees

September 9, 2015

NLRB Decision Will Impact Staffing Agency Relationships

July 29, 2015

Department of Labor Revises FMLA Forms

July 24, 2015

Privacy Chapter, Business Disputes: Claims and Remedies Deskbook

July 13, 2015

DOL Seeking Comments on Proposed Amendments to FLSA "White Collar" Exemptions

July 1, 2015

Supreme Court's Decision Regarding Marriage Equality May Require Some Employers to Take Immediate Action

February 19, 2015

Sick Time and Paid Leave Bills Proposed in Minnesota Legislature

December 31, 2014

National Labor Relations Board Update

September 4, 2014

Why Employers Should be Concerned about the NLRB General Counsel's McDonald's Decision

June 11, 2014

Action Steps for Employers in Light of the Women's Economic Security Act

June 11, 2014

The New Medical Cannabis Act and Drug Testing in Minnesota

May 16, 2014

Minnesota's New Women's Economic Security Act