

# Labor & Employment

Labor and employment is a constantly changing practice area governed by a profusion of interrelated federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Now more than ever counsel on the cutting edge is essential. Cozen O'Connor has a dedicated team of labor and employment lawyers who focus on keeping clients informed and protected.

Our full-service labor and employment department represents a broad range of entities: exchange-listed companies, private enterprises, nonprofits, governments, and trade associations. We handle high-stakes employment litigation, including individual and class claims of discrimination, harassment, wage and hour violations, defamation, wrongful discharge, and issues involving restrictive covenants, noncompetes, nonsolicitation, and nondisclosure of confidential information. We appear regularly before federal and state courts, agencies and departments (such as the EEOC, NLRB, DOL, IRS, OSHA, and ICE), and arbitrators. We also handle traditional labor law matters, helping employers foster positive workplace relations, negotiate collective bargaining agreements, and handle labor arbitrations and unfair labor practice proceedings.

When a specific labor or employment issue arises, clients immediately face the competing goals of vigorously refuting accusations or adverse precedents, and restoring a sense of calm and unity of purpose to the workplace. Cozen O'Connor attorneys guide clients through these and other complex situations and enable them to take decisive action without compromising operational effectiveness. We are keenly aware that the legal response must operate in harmony with the business goals.

One of our greatest assets in this endeavor is the depth of our trial and courtroom experience. We have dozens of lead attorneys who routinely appear in court, agency and arbitration proceedings, giving us tremendous insight into how a case is likely to play out in a litigation setting. That hard-earned knowledge serves our clients well as we partner with them to decide upon a strategic approach.

## SERVICES

### Employment Litigation

- Investigate employee claims or government inquiries
- Defend clients against individual or class (collective) action lawsuits
- Represent employers in suits alleging discrimination and harassment on the basis of age, race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other areas protected under federal, state and local law
- Represent employers in cases involving defamation, invasion of privacy, trade secrets and restrictive covenants, duty-of-loyalty claims, equal-pay disputes, employment benefits disputes, pension and benefit plan fiduciary liability, wage-and-hour claims, whistle-blowers, and wrongful-discharge claims
- Advocate for clients in trade secrets and restrictive covenant cases

### Employer Advising, Training and Investigations

- Assist in the resolution of individual workplace problems
- Create effective employee benefits and executive compensation programs
- Advise in-house counsel, human resources professionals, and executives in the development of sound personnel policies that limit liability and enhance productivity
- Train staff to ensure fair and consistent enforcement of personnel policies
- Perform workplace audits and internal investigations



**Thomas S. Giotto**  
Chair, Labor & Employment Department

tgiotto@cozen.com  
Phone (412) 620-6550  
Fax (412) 275-2390



**Michael C. Schmidt**  
Vice Chair, Labor & Employment Department

mschmidt@cozen.com  
Phone (212) 453-3937  
Fax (866) 736-3682



**Anna Wermuth**  
Vice Chair, Labor & Employment Department

awermuth@cozen.com  
Phone (312) 474-7876  
Fax (312) 878-2023

### Related Practice Areas

- Affirmative Action, OFCCP, and Related Compliance
- Artificial Intelligence
- Class Actions
- Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation
- Employment Litigation
- Environmental, Social & Governance
- Family Office
- Health Care & Life Sciences
- Immigration Policy & Strategy
- Italy Practice
- Labor Relations & Disputes

- Review and draft employment policies and manuals, as well as employment and termination/severance agreements

### Labor Relations & Disputes

- Help managers build cooperative relationships with their workforce, unionized or not
- Advise clients on NLRB regulations and represent employers in inquiries and hearings
- Evaluate and implement alternative labor-management relationships
- Negotiate collective bargaining agreements and handle arbitration proceedings
- Respond to strike threats, work stoppages and mass picketing
- Defend employers against charges of unfair labor practices, including those alleging unlawful termination, failure to bargain in good faith, and interference with employee rights

### CLIENTS

Our clients operate in diverse industries, including:

- Chemical
- Education
- Energy and utilities
- Financial services
- Government
- Health care
- Hospitality
- Retail
- Technology
- Transportation and logistics

### TEAM

Our attorneys have been commended by independent legal observers for their “outstanding client service” and identified as some of the “most prominent employment defense attorneys” in the country. The team includes fellows of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers and fellows of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Members of our team are regularly recognized by leading publications such as *Chambers USA*, *Best Lawyers*, *Super Lawyers*, and others. Most recently, two senior members of the department were recognized among “The Nation’s Top 100 Most Powerful Employment Attorneys” by *Human Resource Executive* magazine.

As many large law firms trim their labor and employment practices and once-small boutiques expand into national litigation factories, Cozen O’Connor is steadfast in its conviction that the most sophisticated labor and employment matters are best served by practitioners operating within a full-service firm. Our labor and employment attorneys work closely with their colleagues in corporate, tax, M&A, real estate, and antitrust law to see all sides of an issue and provide comprehensive analyses. In addition, Cozen O’Connor attorneys do not churn out canned solutions to generic problems. Our clients demand tailored, timely advice that is informed by a genuine understanding of their business – and that’s what we provide.

### Experience

- Mergers & Acquisitions – Global
- Nonprofit & Tax-Exempt Organizations
- Railway Labor Act
- Strategic Communications/Reputation Management
- Trade Secrets, Restrictive Covenants, and Computer Abuse
- Workplace Safety and Health

### Industry Sectors

- Cannabis
- Education
- Food & Beverage
- Gaming
- Hospitality
- Insurance
- Real Estate & Construction
- Retail
- Sports