



## Laura B. Friedel

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Laura Friedel is a partner and chair of the firm's Labor & Employment Group. She helps businesses maximize their most important and often trickiest asset - their employees. Laura works with companies to develop employment documents, policies and practices that improve employee relations while protecting the company's investment in its people and minimizing legal risk. When disputes arise, Laura works closely with clients to determine their business goals relating to the claim and then targets the litigation, arbitration or settlement discussions to meet those goals. And when a union is involved (or is seeking to insert itself), Laura helps companies understand and meet their obligations under labor laws while still adhering to their larger business goals.

Laura is currently the chair of LP's Women's Initiative (LPW). She focuses on supporting the firm's women in reaching personal and professional goals and building relationships, while serving as a resource to firm attorneys on gender-related issues and a champion for diversity as an essential component of exceptional client service.

### **Counseling and other day-to-day representation:**

The best way to avoid litigation (or be in the best position should it arise) is to develop and implement strong employment practices. Best practices, however, are not one size fits all. Laura works with companies of all sizes to develop employment policies and practices, prepare employee-related documents and respond to particular questions and situations, all with an eye toward improving employee relations, minimizing risk, and effectively operating the business. Laura assists companies in drafting and negotiating employment and severance agreements, agreements with temporary staffing agencies, confidentiality agreements, and non-solicitation and non-competition agreements.

### **Employment Litigation:**

Sometimes, despite the best practices, employees, former employees and government agencies file claims against employers. Laura represents companies before federal and state courts and agencies in all types of employment litigation - including discrimination, harassment and retaliation litigation, wage and hour and wage payment claims, whistleblower complaints, and restrictive covenant disputes. She recognizes that not all cases should be litigated in the same manner and works with her clients to determine how to best reach their goals.

## **Traditional Labor / Union Relations:**

Laura has extensive experience assisting companies in managing their relationships with unions. When a union first presents itself, Laura works with companies to put forth a targeted campaign explaining to employees why they should reject the union. In situations where a union is already involved, Laura helps businesses navigate their legal obligations and represents companies in negotiations, arbitrations and other dealings with the union. Laura also has extensive experience representing companies before the National Labor Relations Board and in union-related appeals to the federal courts.

## **Bar Admissions**

Illinois, 1998

## **Court Admissions**

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Trial Bar

U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Indiana

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan

## **Education**

University of Chicago Law School, J.D., 1998

Washington University in St. Louis, A.B., magna cum laude, 1995

## **Memberships**

Member, American Bar Association Federal Labor Standards Legislation Committee

Past Chair, American Bar Association Equal Pay Act Subcommittee

Past President, Am Yisrael Conservative Congregation of the North Shore

## **Awards**

Illinois Super Lawyer - 2012 - 2016

Named as one of "40 Illinois Attorneys Under 40 to Watch" by the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, 2011