



Julie L. Trester

Member

Chicago

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Julie represents management on a wide array of labor and employment issues. She regularly counsels employers about compliance with applicable laws, including local, state, and federal fair employment laws, the FLSA and state equivalents, the NLRA, the WARN Act and its state counterparts, and compliance with Executive Order 11246. She advises employers with respect to developing successful and legally compliant diversity initiatives. She represents employers in collective bargaining, labor arbitrations, and unfair labor practice proceedings. She also regularly litigates the full panoply of labor and employment issues before federal and state agencies and courts. She has handled numerous appellate matters and has argued before the U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeals for the Third and Seventh Circuits, the Illinois Supreme Court, the Iowa Supreme Court, and various districts of the Illinois Appellate Court.

Julie graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Illinois College of Law, receiving the Rickert Award for Public Service as the result of her pro bono contributions in law school. She is the former co-chair of the Cozen O'Connor Women's Initiative and a member of the firm's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. She served on the inaugural board of directors for the Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law Firms and currently sits on the board of directors for the Infant Welfare Society of Evanston, an organization dedicated to the care and early education of infants and toddlers. She and has also been a part of two separate Host Committees for the Chicago Foundation for Women's Annual Luncheon. Julie previously taught as an adjunct professor at the Chicago-Kent College of Law and is a frequent writer and speaker on labor and employment law issues.

Experience

Won a unanimous defense verdict on behalf of a medical center, a university, and two individual defendants at the conclusion of a three-week jury trial in federal court in Chicago in which the clients' potential exposure was \$80 million. The plaintiff, an orthopedic surgery resident and Air National Guard officer whose employment was terminated in the final year of his residency, brought claims of breach of contract, defamation, and discrimination and harassment under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA"), and sought back pay and reinstatement or lifetime earnings as a spine surgeon. After hearing testimony from more than a dozen witnesses, and with a 19-page verdict form in hand, the jury reached its verdict in less than three hours.

Persuaded the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit to reverse an unfair labor practice finding based upon a healthcare client's discharge of a union representative as part of a reduction-in-force

Obtained numerous summary judgments on behalf of employers in complicated labor and employment cases

Successfully handled labor and employment cases through trial, post-trial proceedings, and appeal

Obtained summary judgment for an insurance company client after it terminated a sales manager who engaged in criminal conduct that affected its core business. The plaintiff was terminated after he recruited and appointed agents who did not have proper licenses under Florida state law. The agents were unlawfully appointed so that the region's sales team could make its recruitment quota for bonus

Practice Areas

- Employment Litigation
- Labor & Employment
- Labor Relations & Disputes

Education

- University of Illinois College of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1989
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, B.A., *cum laude*, 1986

Bar Admissions

- Illinois
- Arizona

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court -- Arizona
- U.S. District Court -- Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court -- Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court -- Southern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court -- Southern District of Iowa
- U.S. District Court -- New Jersey
- U.S. District Court -- Western District of New York
- U.S. District Court -- Western District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court -- Eastern District of Wisconsin

Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law Firms (Board Member, 2008-2009; Programming Committee Member, 2008-present)
- IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law (Adjunct Professor, 1996-2000)

Awards & Honors

- Best Lawyers in America 2024-2025
- Illinois Super Lawyer, 2011 - 2018
- Leading Lawyers Network

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eligibility. The matter was particularly important to the client because the plaintiff denied being the mastermind behind the scheme, pointing the finger at officer-level employees in the region and claiming that he had been fired not for participating in the scheme but because he was the target of race and national origin discrimination.

Defended an employer against a religious discrimination claim brought by a Seventh Day Adventist who alleged that the employer had unlawfully failed to adjust his schedule to accommodate his religious beliefs.

Won summary judgment on behalf of an insurance company in a collective action in which a group of auto adjusters claimed they had been terminated for complaining that their supervisors instructed them to “lowball” damage estimates to keep costs down. Defeated the plaintiffs' allegation of termination in violation of public policy by demonstrating that — to the extent there was a scheme to “lowball” damage estimates, a fact the defendant strenuously denied — the plaintiffs had participated in and benefited from it and were therefore “in pari delicto” (i.e., also at fault). Further, we successfully argued that there was no “whistleblowing” as a matter of law because — according to their own version of the facts — the plaintiffs purportedly complained about the scheme only to the supervisors who had allegedly developed it, not to any third parties.