HUSCH BLACKWELL



Julianne P. Story

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

Julianne is an accomplished litigator and advisor who has a deep understanding of the challenges employers face.

In addition to trying cases in state and federal court, Julianne provides strategic counsel to clients navigating the ever-changing landscape of labor and employment law. She believes employers can often avoid problems by being proactive. She offers guidance on laws involving harassment, discrimination and retaliation; advises on leave issues under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA); and counsels on wage and hour compliance. She advises clients across a wide variety of industries, including the emerging cannabis and industrial hemp sector.

She knows that employment disputes distract clients from fulfilling the mission of their business – providing excellent products and services for their customers.

Experienced in effective dispute resolution procedures, Julianne also represents employers in mediation and arbitrations. She drafts and litigates employment agreements and restrictive covenants and regularly conducts human resources audits and training to ensure effective HR practices. She also has significant experience in

"Julianne is a talented attorney who provides indispensable support to our organization."

— Chambers USA 2024

Industries

Healthcare

Manufacturing

Services

Cannabis

Emerging Companies & Venture Capital

Employment Litigation Defense

Healthcare Labor & Employment and Immigration

Healthcare Providers

HR Consultation & Training

Labor & Employment

Medical Staff & Governance

Non-Competes & Restrictive Covenants

Pay Equity

Workplace Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

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investigating all types of workplace misconduct and advises clients on strategies to minimize risk.

Julianne is a member of the firm's Executive Board.

Featured Experience

Employer Wins Total Defense Victory in Discrimination Case

Julianne, as first chair of the trial team, won a trial victory for an employer that was sued by a former director-level employee who alleged 20 claims under state and federal anti-discrimination laws (Title VII, Section 1981, the Equal Pay Act and the Missouri Human Rights Act) and state tort claims for defamation and invasion of privacy and publicity. The employee alleged discrimination and harassment based on gender, religion, race and national origin, as well as retaliation. Before trial, upon the employer's motion, the court disposed of 13 claims. Following a week-long trial, the federal jury found in the employer's favor on all seven remaining claims of gender, race and national origin discrimination and retaliation under federal law.

Experience

TRIAL

- Defended medical practice and its 11 physician shareholders in $15 million lawsuit filed by former employee and shareholder after client's internal investigation established plaintiff had behaved inappropriately with two female employees. Obtained summary judgment on all but one claim. At trial, jury awarded plaintiff the lesser amount of stipulated damages and awarded judgment in client's favor on related indemnification claim, as well as client attorneys' fees and expenses.
- Won bench trial award in federal court in favor of defendant multi-national corporation on claim for alleged breach of contract brought by former Vice President-level employee seeking severance under employer's severance policy. Appellate court affirmed the trial court's judgment in favor of the employer on the former employee's claim for severance.

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Experience

SUMMARY JUDGMENTS

- Won summary judgment on behalf of manufacturing client who had terminated long-term employee due to continued violation of covid protocols after "last chance" agreement. Employee alleged termination based on age, race, and color. Summary judgment granted on all claims in Western District of Missouri.
- Won summary judgment in favor of hospital in multimillion-dollar case by employed physician alleging discrimination based on race and religion and retaliation in plaintiff-friendly jurisdiction.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of defendant financial services employer in putative class action case alleging violations of the Indiana Wage Payment Act based on timing of bonus payments.
- Defended major tax service company in lawsuit filed by former employee who alleged company had breached her employment agreement, terminated her in violation of public policy and denied her bonuses, commissions and overtime when it terminated her employment. Obtained summary judgment in client's favor in trial court, which was affirmed on appeal.

WAGE & HOUR

- Achieved affirmation of dismissal from Eighth Circuit of consolidated class and collective action against defendant in Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) case involving employment contracts and training.
- Defended group of nursing homes and their management company in Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) lawsuit where plaintiffs alleged they missed meal breaks that were automatically deducted from their pay. Achieved favorable outcome for client.
- Advised hospitals and other healthcare clients on variety of state and federal wage and hour issues, including lunch breaks, travel time and overtime.

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Experience

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

- Successfully represented GEICO before the United States District Court for the District of Kansas and the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in a lawsuit where the plaintiff alleged race and disability discrimination, retaliation, and FMLA interference after GEICO terminated his employment for failing to obtain a state license, which was required for his position. In a published opinion, the panel upheld the District Court's grant of summary judgment in favor of GEICO, dismissing the claims. The Court reiterated that its job was not to "second guess" an employer's business judgment and that an employee must meet bona fide job requirements.
- Defended long-term care facility in sexual harassment claim brought by kitchen employee against department manager, which included allegations of sexual misconduct by director of the facility. Achieved favorable resolution for client.
- Defended hospital in whistleblower and discrimination claim brought by former nurse alleging understaffing following termination of her employment for poor work performance. Achieved favorable outcome for client.
- Won pregnancy discrimination case at 10th Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of banking client. Plaintiff was terminated for force balancing and alleged that termination was due to disability and pregnancy. District court granted summary judgment in employer's favor, plaintiff appealed, and decision was affirmed at 10th Circuit.

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Recognition

- *Benchmark Litigation*, Labor & Employment Star - Midwest, 2018-2024
- *The Best Lawyers in America®*
  - Employment Law - Management, 2022-2027
  - Litigation - Labor and Employment, 2021-2027
- *Missouri Lawyers Media*, Missouri Lawyers Awards, Law Firm Leader, 2022
- *Chambers USA*
  - Labor & Employment, 2019-2026
  - Labor & Employment, Recognised Practitioner, 2018
- Lawdragon 500 Leading U.S. Corporate Employment Lawyers, 2020-2027
- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent
- *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers*, Employment & Labor, 2018-2023
- *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*, 2018 Women's Justice Awards
- "Nation's Most Powerful Employment Attorneys," *Human Resource Executive* magazine/Lawdragon, 2018-2019

Education

- J.D., University of Kansas School of Law
- B.A., University of Virginia

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Admissions

- Missouri
- Kansas
- U.S. District Court, District of Kansas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit

Community Leadership

- Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey, Board Member, 2015-present
- Pembroke Hill School, Alumni Network Member, 2007-present



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