HUSCH BLACKWELL



Jessica Simons

SENIOR COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

With an efficiency born of her time in-house, Jessica supports clients' labor and employment needs.

Jessica divides her practice between employment litigation and preventative counsel on employment matters, primarily for clients in the manufacturing and technology spaces. Thanks to previous private practice experience in both the areas of labor and employment as well as employee benefits and ERISA, her broad practice today encompasses discrimination, retaliation, and harassment allegations; wage and hour compliance; employee handbooks and policies; employment-related agreements; administrative complaints; immigration law compliance; health and welfare benefit plans; qualified retirement plans; and employee benefits and employment matters in the context of corporate transactions. After an in-house role with an organization that had several unionized workforces, Jessica also advises clients on traditional labor relations and unionization campaigns.

Prior to joining the firm, Jessica served as senior labor and employment attorney for Menasha Corporation, where she managed global labor and employment, ERISA/employee benefits, and employment-based immigration legal matters for the company and its subsidiaries. Her experience at Menasha is vital to her approach today: Jessica understands firsthand how important fast, efficient answers are to clients who are running businesses, and she provides pragmatic, business-oriented advice on the client's timetable.

Clients appreciate Jessica's broad knowledge of labor and employment law, as well as her inside understanding of the

Industries

Manufacturing
Technology
Transportation

Services

Employment Litigation Defense
Labor & Employment
Traditional Labor Relations

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business challenges they face. She has a strong reputation as a reasonable, practical, solutions-focused attorney who gets clients the answers they need, when they need them.

Experience

- As in-house counsel, managed global labor and employment, ERISA/employee benefits, and employment-based immigration legal matters for parent entity and two operating subsidiaries.
- Drafted employment-related agreements (retention, separation, restrictive covenant, bonus), personnel policies and handbooks, and standard operating procedures.
- Provided guidance on traditional labor matters, including union contract negotiations, grievance responses, and collective bargaining agreement interpretation.
- Represented clients in union arbitrations.
- Oversaw immigration matters involving foreign national employees and candidates (e.g., H-1B and L visas, STEM and STEM OPT, and PERM/green card processes and renewals).
- Developed and implemented internal training on labor and employment legal developments and best practices.
- Advised clients on benefit plan compliance matters under the Internal Revenue Code, ERISA, HIPAA, GINA, MHPAEA, and other applicable laws and regulations.
- Drafted and reviewed health and welfare and retirement plan documents, summary plan descriptions, plan amendments, IRS and DOL corrections filings, and other legally required documents and notices.
- Performed employee benefits legal due diligence to support corporate transactions and assisted with benefit plan transition planning.
- Responded to IRS assessments of employer shared responsibility payment penalties under the PPACA and obtained waiver of millions of dollars in penalties for clients.
- Drafted plan benefit claim and appeal adverse benefit determination letters in compliance with ERISA.

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Experience

- Investigated administrative complaints (e.g., EEOC, state fair employment agency, NLRB, and OSHA), prepared responses, and represented clients in administrative hearings.

Recognition

- *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America*
    - Corporate, 2021

Education

- J.D., Marquette University Law School
    - *magna cum laude*
    - *Marquette Law Review*, Associate Editor
- B.S., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
    - *summa cum laude*

Admissions

- Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

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Community Leadership

Jessica is a dedicated supporter of The Cathedral Center, a women's shelter in downtown Milwaukee, where she served on the Board of Directors from 2018 through 2024. She continues to participate actively on the Board's human resources committee after previously serving as committee chair.

Jessica also volunteers frequently with her children's elementary school and serves as vice president of the Parent Teacher Organization.



2026 Pro Bono Contributor

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