

Deborah Autrey

Associate

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Minneapolis – 612.492.5408



Deborah advises employers on complex workplace issues, conducts sensitive workplace investigations, and represents organizations in high-stakes employment disputes.

Deborah partners with employers to navigate matters involving significant legal, operational, and reputational risk, helping them make informed decisions that are both legally sound and practical to implement.

Clients value Deborah's thoughtful, practical approach and her ability to communicate clearly through difficult situations. Known for her strong listening skills and collaborative style, she focuses on identifying solutions that not only address legal risks but also align with the organization's operational needs. Clients turn to Deborah for her depth of experience, sound judgment, and ability to draw from a diverse professional background to solve complex employment challenges.

Drawing on experience in private practice, government, and corporate compliance, Deborah brings a multifaceted perspective to every engagement. Having served both as a trusted advisor and as an investigator, she understands the competing demands organizations face when responding to workplace concerns. When disputes arise, Deborah represents employers in litigation and agency proceedings involving claims of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, disability accommodation, and protected leave under Title VII, ADA, FMLA, and related state and local laws. She guides clients through every stage of the dispute process, from pre-litigation counseling and agency responses to litigation and resolution.

Deborah works closely with executives, human resources professionals, and in-house counsel to uncover facts, assess risk, and develop effective strategies tailored to each client's objectives and workplace culture.

Deborah regularly conducts workplace investigations involving allegations of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, misconduct, and other sensitive employee

Education

- University of Arkansas School of Law (J.D., 2018)
 - Dean's List
- University of Arkansas (B.A., English, Minor in Legal Studies, 2015)

Bar Admissions

- Minnesota

relations issues. She also provides strategic advice on high-risk discipline and termination decisions, disability accommodations and leave management, wage and hour compliance, and workplace policies and practices.

A distinguishing feature of Deborah's practice is her ability to integrate investigative, compliance, and litigation perspectives to help employers address workplace concerns proactively, manage risk effectively, and resolve disputes efficiently.

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota

Accolades

- MSBA, North Star Lawyer, 2025
- Service to MWL Award: In recognition of leadership to advance the mission of Minnesota Women Lawyers, 2023
- Consistently providing pro bono legal assistance to those in need through Dorsey's Pro Bono program

Professional Affiliations

- Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL) (2019-present)
 - Board Director (2020-present)
 - Former Diversity & Inclusion Co-Chair (2020-2024)
 - Former Publications Co-Chair & Editor (2020-2022)
- Black Women Attorneys Founder & Co-Chair (2023-present)
- Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers (MABL) – Member (2019-present)

Clerkships

- Hennepin County District Court, Honorable Julie E. Allyn, 2020–2021

Legal Writings

- Author, *Navigating Leave for Legal Professionals with Disabilities*, Hennepin Lawyer, Vol. 2024–2025, No. 32 (Feb. 24, 2025)
- Contributing Author, *Internal Employment Investigations Handbook*, Minnesota Continuing Legal Education, 2nd Edition (2025)
- Author, *Success from the Bottom: A New Lawyer's Perspective*, Bench & Bar Minnesota, LXXVI, 2019, at 10-11.
- Author, *A Spa Day for Your Brain*, With Equal Right, LXXII, no. III, 20 (Apr. 2022)
- Author, *MWL Member Spotlight: Deborah Autrey*, With Equal Right, LXX, no. III (2020)
- Contributor, *Regulating Wage Theft*, 94 Wash. L. Rev. 759 (2019)

Select Speaking Engagements

- *Labor and Employment 2025 Symposium* - Materials, August 21, 2025
- Program Materials: *Bank Counsel Roundtable: Three Months in to the New*

Administration – What to Know about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), April 22, 2025

- Presenter, *Recent Executive Orders: Navigating Legal Practice Through the Lens of Humanity, Equity, and Inclusion*
 - Presenter, *Navigating Leave for Legal Professionals with Disabilities*
 - Presenter, *Access, Advocacy, and Affinity: Tools for Developing Disability-Inclusive Practices*
 - Presenter, *Inclusive Language Matters: Exploring the Power of Our Words*
 - Contributor, *The Crown Act: Impact in the Workplace*
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Insights

March 21, 2025

EEOC and DOJ Issue Joint Press Release and Technical Assistance Documents on “Unlawful DEI-Related Discrimination”