

Pavlina Kochankovska Rafter

Senior Attorney

rafter.pavlina@dorsey.com

Southern California – 714.800.1436



Pavlina is a trusted advisor, helping clients to quickly resolve complicated labor and employment issues.

Pavlina supports clients by advising on a wide variety of labor and employment issues, including employment discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation and wrongful discharge claims. She also helps clients with operations in multiple states comply with employment laws with special emphasis in the areas of wage and hour laws, the ADA, noncompetition agreements and handbooks and policies. She is skilled at dispute resolution, consistently achieving her client's goals.

Where litigation cannot be avoided, she has successfully represented clients at all phases, from inception of lawsuit through settlement, including trial proceedings, appellate practice and arbitration. Pavlina's thorough approach has contributed to a history of dismissals at early stages of litigation.

Select Experience

- Defended employer against claims of discrimination based on race and religion, successfully obtaining dismissal of all claims.
- Defended employer against allegations of age discrimination, successfully negotiating a favorable settlement for the client and avoiding trial.
- Represented employer in a disability discrimination case, successfully obtaining a dismissal of all claims against her client.
- Successfully argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, obtaining not only a ruling in favor of her client, but also helping to set precedent in a disability discrimination case.

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the Central District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

Education

- Illinois Institute of Technology Chicago-Kent College of Law (J.D., 1999)
 - Graduated with Honors; National Trial Advocacy Team Member; Regional Champion, ABA National Trial Competition; National Quarterfinalist, ABA National Trial Competition
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (B.S., Business Administration, 1994)

Bar Admissions

- California
- Illinois

- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (General and Trial Bar)

Accolades

- Dorsey & Whitney – Scales of Justice Team Award (Veterans Rights Team), 2025

Select Presentations

- Speaker, Staying Ahead: Leaves of Absence and Disability Accommodations – Navigating Sticky Scenarios from Medical Marijuana to “Emotional Support” Animals and More, Costa Mesa, CA, May 22, 2019
- Speaker, Salary History and Pay Equity, Professionals in Human Resources Association, La Jolla, CA, January 30, 2019
- Speaker, Salary History and Pay Equity, Professionals in Human Resources Association, Burbank, CA, January 22, 2019
- Speaker, Salary History and Pay Equity, Professionals in Human Resources Association, Riverside, CA, January 16, 2019
- Speaker, Salary History and Pay Equity, Professionals in Human Resources Association, Anaheim, CA, January 10, 2019

Insights

July 2, 2024

Legislative Action Heralds Sweeping Changes to PAGA, Resulting in Tools for More Effective Administration and Potential to Curb Abuse, Benefiting Both Employers and Workers

September 28, 2022

California Governor Gavin Newsom Signs Update to State’s Pay Transparency Law, Setting Out New Pay Disclosure Requirements

July 16, 2021

Missed Meal Period Penalty Must Include Adjustment for Nondiscretionary Payments

September 18, 2020

Job-Protected Leave Under the California Family Rights Act Expands to Apply to Employers with Five or More Employees Effective January 1, 2021

September 14, 2020

Five FAQs: Paid Sick Leave for COVID-19-Qualifying Reasons Available to All California Employees Under New Law

April 10, 2020

California Cities and Counties Issue Orders and Recommendations on Use of Face

Coverings in the Workplace

March 13, 2020

In Remarkable Reversal, California Supreme Court Takes a Broad View of Standing Under PAGA

February 14, 2020

California Supreme Court Rules that Employees Must be Paid During Mandatory Security Searches

October 17, 2019

Five FAQs on California's New Ban on Mandatory Arbitration Agreements

October 16, 2019

Five FAQs on California's New Ban on Mandatory Arbitration Agreements

September 23, 2019

FAQs for Employers Following the Passage of California's New Law on Independent Contractor Misclassification

October 2, 2018

California Governor Signs Spate of #MeToo Era Bills Into Law

September 6, 2018

California High Court Confirms Written Authorization Required For Most Employer Background Checks