

Katherine Koop Irwin

Partner

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Industries

Energy

Oil, Gas & Minerals

Practice Areas

Labor & Employment

Bar Memberships

Pennsylvania

Languages

English

German

Kate is an employment and labor law attorney, professional speaker and corporate trainer. She has represented, counseled and helped employers, business owners, HR professionals, in-house attorneys and managerial employees on how to avoid employment law issues and lawsuits while focusing on their business goals. She regularly advises employers on all facets of the employer-employee relationship, including discrimination and retaliation claims, requests for accommodations and leave, reports of harassment, and wage and hour compliance. She also serves clients in traditional areas of labor law, including negotiating collective bargaining agreements, handling grievance and arbitration matters, and defending employers before the National Labor Relations Board.

Problem Solver. Kate looks for dynamic solutions to address clients' issues. She develops creative, legally compliant strategies for resolving employee challenges in real time. From navigating difficult disciplinary matters to creating compliant COVID-19 vaccination programs, Kate works with clients to execute comprehensive human resources strategies that both comply with the law and advance the clients' business needs.

Proactive, not reactive. Kate works with business owners and human resources professionals to identify and address employment problems early. She trains executives, supervisors and managers to recognize legal issues, understand their responsibilities and avoid common pitfalls. If or when litigation is necessary, Kate is a fierce advocate for her clients' interests before administrative agencies and in the state and federal courts.

Analytical and efficient. Kate gives prompt attention to her clients' needs whether the issue is simple or complex and strives to provide cost-effective solutions. Understanding that each client has different pain points and objectives in dealing with employment matters, she stays informed on the most recent developments in the clients' industries by, amongst other things, keeping abreast of government enforcement priorities, diligently monitoring changes to local, state and federal laws and understanding industry trends. She regularly lectures to national and regional trade, industry and human resources associations and is an adjunct professor at several universities. Kate represents manufacturers, health care providers, utilities, municipalities, banks, construction contractors, insurance companies, large and small businesses and executives.

Clients commonly reach out to Kate for:

- Guidance on personnel matters;
- Review of pay practices;
- Investigation of harassment, discrimination and retaliation complaints;
- Defense of administrative agency claims before the EEOC, PHRC, DOL, NLRB and OSHA;
- Negotiation and enforcement of employment contracts; and
- Advice on labor and union issues.

Kate is a native of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. She lives with her husband and their Bernedoodle in Pittsburgh. She is an avid skier and hiker and enjoys all of the wonderful cultural, arts and outdoor activities Western Pennsylvania offers.

Other Info About Kate

Experience

Obtained numerous dismissals of employment-claims at the Motion to Dismiss or Summary Judgment stages in federal and state courts.

Obtained million-dollar verdict in employment-contract dispute.

Secured several emergency-injunctive relief orders for employers in non-competition and non-solicitation cases against departing executives.

Achieved favorable resolution of agency charges, including countless “no-cause” determinations.

Investigated claims of harassment, retaliation and discrimination and provided comprehensive reports that served as the basis for later positive resolutions.

Defended and resolved wage-and-hour collective and class action claims.

Obtained labor-arbitration awards upholding discipline and terminations in favor of employers.

Education

Duquesne University School of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*

- Managing Editor of *Duquesne Law Review*
- Chair of the Women’s Law Association-Woman of the Year Award
- Moot Court
- Certificate of study in Chinese Law while attending the Chinese University of Political Science and Law in Beijing, People’s Republic of China

University of Pittsburgh, B.A., *magna cum laude*

- Political Science
- Legal Studies
- German Language

Recognition

The Best Lawyers in America®, Litigation – Labor and Employment, 2022-2027; Health Care Law, 2024-2027; Labor Law – Management, 2024; Employment Law – Management, 2026-2027

Professional Affiliations

Allegheny County Bar Association, Member, Women's and Young Lawyers Divisions

Pennsylvania Bar Association, Member

American Bar Association, Member

Civic Activities

The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Co-Chair, Partners Board

The Neighborhood Academy, Advisory Board Member

La Roche University and Penn State New Kensington, Adjunct Professor

Featured Articles

Allegheny County Implements New Mandatory Paid Parental Leave Law

New York City's Executive Order "Protecting Workers from Extreme Heat" Shows Continued Focus on Safety for Outdoor Workers

Evolving Landscape of Non-Compete Agreements

The Non-Compete Agreement Landscape in 2025

EEOC Issues Final Rule on Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and Employers' Duty to Accommodate

NLRB and DOL Target Independent Contractor Misclassification

EEOC COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate FAQ Updates Address Religious Objections

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