

Mellissa A. Schafer

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She/Her

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About Mellissa

Mellissa has managed labor and employment matters and workplace injury lawsuits for over 25 years. She represents a leading human resources company, insurers, pharmacies, hotels, construction firms, national retailers, and other clients in employment disputes. Her experience includes discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wrongful termination, and wage and hour issues. She also advises employers on policies, risk management, litigation strategy, and reducing workers' compensation claims.

In her broad practice, Mellissa also serves clients in the healthcare sector, representing assisted living and residential care facilities, skilled nursing and independent living communities, continuing care retirement communities, and home care, home health, and hospice agencies. She handles serious and willful injury cases, 132(a) claims, and return-to-work practices, providing effective legal support for these complex matters.

Areas of Focus

Industries: Aging Services; Cannabis ; Construction; Healthcare; Insurance;

Transportation & Mobility

Services: Employment Advice & Counseling; Employment Litigation;

Insurance Coverage Litigation & Counseling; Labor & Employment

Recognition

- Marquette University Law School, *Marquette Sports Law Journal*, Executive Editor; American Jurisprudence Award in Health Care Provider Liability

Credentials

Education

Marquette University Law School, JD, 1999

University of Southern California, BS, 1995

Bar Admissions

California

Court Admissions

US District Court for the Central District of California

US District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin

US District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin

Interests

Did you know...

Melissa enjoys traveling, especially wine tasting throughout Europe, spending time with friends and family, and cheering on the USC Trojans.

Thought Leadership

Presentations

- Co-Presenter, “Practical Considerations in Handling Workers’ Compensation Claims,” Hinshaw’s 29th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Schaumburg, Illinois, October 9, 2025
- Welcome Remarks, Hinshaw’s 29th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Schaumburg, Illinois, October 9, 2025
- Welcome Remarks, Hinshaw’s 28th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Hoffman Estates, Illinois, November 13, 2024
- Co-Presenter, “L&E Regional Law Updates: West Coast,” Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP, Virtual Event, January 10, 2024

- “Navigate Workforce Injury Claims Like a Pro,” 2023 California Assisted Living Association (CALA) Fall Conference & Trade Show, Palm Springs, California, November 8, 2023
- Co-Presenter, “Executive Director Legal Pitfalls - The Defense Attorney Perspective,” Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP, Webinar, January 26, 2023
- Panelist, “Workers’ Comp, OSHA & Risk Management Mitigation ... Oh My!,” California Assisted Living Association (CALA) 2022 Fall Conference & Trade Show, Palm Springs, California, November 8, 2022
- Panelist, “Joint Employment, Wage and Hour, and Other Legislative News,” Hinshaw’s 26th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Hoffman Estates, Illinois, October 27, 2022
- Co-Presenter, “West Coast Labor & Employment Regional Law Update,” Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP, Virtual Event, July 26, 2022
- Co-Presenter, “Top 10 Issues and Developments in California Workers’ Compensation in 2021,” National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, Webinar, August 10, 2021
- Co-Presenter, “LGBTQ+ Corporate Equality and Harassment Prevention Training,” Hinshaw Pride Month Training Program, June 10, 2021
- Co-Presenter, “The Labor & Employment Year in Review: Is It Over Yet?” West Coast Session, Hinshaw’s 25th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Virtual Event, October 26, 2020
- “Self-Expression in the California Workplace: How to Strike a Legal Balance in Drafting and Enforcing Dress, Grooming, and Bathroom Use Policies,” 12th Annual California Employment Law Update, The Westin South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa, California, October 12, 2017
- “Comp Coast to Coast Workers’ Compensation Strategies From a National Perspective,” Hinshaw’s Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Hoffman Estates, Illinois, October 2013
- “General Principles of Workers’ Compensation” and “Settlements & Return to Work Issues,” Workers’ Compensation Law & Practice Seminar, Sterling Education Services, Inc., Pasadena, California, October 2012
- “Total Disability/Vocational Strategies,” CWCDAA 2012 Annual Summer Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, June 2012
- “Utilization of the Vocational Expert in the Workers’ Compensation Setting,” VocEX 2011, Los Angeles, California, January 2011
- “Implementing Successful Surveillance to Defeat Fraudulent Claims,” Council on Education Management, Los Angeles, California, May 2005

Publications

- “New Laws Will Keep Calif. Employers On Their Toes In 2021,” *Law360*, January 7, 2021
- “Calif. Lawmakers Kept Employers On Their Toes In 2019,” *Law360*, December 19, 2019
- “California’s Top Employment Law Developments In 2018,” *Law360*, December 17, 2018
- “Brief Synopsis on Wisconsin Law Involving Subpoenas and Search Warrants,” *Risky Business*, Wisconsin Society for Health Care Risk Management, January 2004

Blog Posts

- The 12 Days of California Labor and Employment Series – Day 12 “Agricultural Employees Given Another Reason to Use Sick Leave”, Dec 19, 2024
- The 12 Days of California Labor and Employment Series – Day 11 “No Vacation Time Prior to Utilizing Paid Family Leave”, Dec 18, 2024
- The 12 Days of California Labor and Employment Series – Day 10 “Minimum Wage Updates”, Dec 17, 2024
- The 12 Days of California Labor and Employment Series – Day 9 “New Social Audit Requirements for Child Labor”, Dec 16, 2024
- The 12 Days of California Labor and Employment Series – Day 8 “Required Whistleblower Notices”, Dec 13, 2024

Events

- Hinshaw’s Labor & Employment Regional Law Updates, Jan 10, 2024
- Mellissa Schafer to Present at the California Assisted Living Association (CALA) Fall Conference & Trade Show, Nov 8, 2023
- David Alfini and Mellissa Schafer to Present at the California Assisted Living Association (CALA) 2022 Fall Conference & Trade Show, Nov 8, 2022
- 26th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, Thursday, October 27, 2022 | 9:00 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.
- 25th Annual Labor & Employment Seminar – Virtual for 2020, October 26 - 30, 2020

Hinshaw Newsletters

- Labor & Employment Chronicle - Spring 2019 Edition, May 10, 2019
- Employment Practices Newsletter - December 2015 Edition, Dec 4, 2015
- Employment Practices Newsletter - August 2013 Edition, Aug 1, 2013
- Employment Practices Newsletter - December 2012 Edition, Dec 3, 2012
- Employment Practices Newsletter - August 2012 Edition, Aug 1, 2012

In The News

- Mellissa Schafer Discusses California Paid Sick Leave Requirements in SHRM Magazine, Feb 19, 2024
- Mellissa Schafer Provides Best Practices on How Employers Can Mitigate Potential Liability for Remote Work Injuries, Apr 20, 2022
- In Law360, Mellissa Schafer Provides Expert Analysis on New Laws for California Employers to Be Mindful of in 2021, Feb 8, 2021
- Are You Ready? Influx of New California Employment Laws Go into Effect January 1, Dec 20, 2018
- Mellissa Schafer and Brandon Takahashi Present at 12th Annual California Employment Law Update Conference, Nov 8, 2017

Insights for Employers Alerts

- Frequently Asked Questions Employers Have About the New CDC COVID-19 Guidelines, May 18, 2021
- Federal Court in New York Strikes Down Key Provisions of DOL's FFCRA Final Rule, Aug 7, 2020
- Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Mar 19, 2020
- Employer FAQs for COVID-19 (Coronavirus), Mar 18, 2020
- Employment Practices Newsletter - July 2015, Jul 1, 2015

Webinars

- Executive Director Legal Pitfalls – The Defense Attorney Perspective, Thursday, January 26, 2023
- Labor & Employment Regional Law Update, Tuesday, July 26, 2022
- LGBTQ+ Employment Law Roundup, June 23, 2021 | 5:00 p.m. Pacific | 7:00 p.m. Central
- Considerations for Keeping Employees Safe as They Return to Work, May 28, 2020

[*View all of Mellissa's Insights*](#)