

Charles B. Leuin

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Overview

Charles is an accomplished first-chair trial lawyer and trusted employment counselor who focuses his practice on a range of complex employment and commercial litigation matters. His work encompasses restrictive covenant, trade secret and other intellectual property litigation, workplace discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims, employment and whistleblower litigation, contract litigation and business disputes, wage-and-hour disputes, fiduciary litigation, and class action defense. He regularly represents management in disputes arising under Title VII, the ADA, the ADEA, the FMLA, the FLSA, and their state and local counterparts, whether brought as individual actions, multi-plaintiff matters, or class and collective proceedings.

He possesses wide-ranging trial and appellate experience and has appeared in state and federal courts throughout Illinois and across the nation, as well as before administrative agencies including the EEOC and state equivalents. Charles knows that his willingness and ability to stand up in front of a judge or jury to argue forcefully and effectively for his clients often is the best way to avoid litigation, to resolve it quickly and efficiently when it does occur, and to advance his clients' interests when full-scale litigation is necessary.

In addition to his courtroom advocacy, Charles is a go-to strategic counselor for his clients, guiding them through the full range of workforce management challenges. He advises on talent acquisition and onboarding protocols, performance management and corrective action, and the development of employee handbooks and workplace policies. Charles also helps clients navigate wage-and-hour compliance, leave administration and reasonable accommodations, organizational restructurings and staff reductions. His counseling practice further extends to workplace investigations, prevention-oriented training programs, and oversight of the complete employment relationship lifespan from recruitment to separation. He also counsels clients on trade secret and other intellectual property protection and contracting practices. Charles functions as a standing and integrated employment law resource for companies across a variety of industries, delivering actionable, commercially-minded advice that helps his clients stay ahead of regulatory developments and maintain compliance with an increasingly complex web of federal, state, and local employment requirements. He regularly advises clients on employment and restrictive covenant-related considerations that arise in connection with corporate transactions, including mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures.

Charles also advises on the preparation, negotiation, and enforcement of the full suite of employment-related agreements, including executive employment contracts, restrictive covenant arrangements, separation and transition agreements, and confidentiality and invention assignment agreements. He brings particular depth of experience to senior executive transitions and departures, and to the design of compensation and incentive structures that safeguard employer interests.

Charles helps his clients address challenges at the intersection of business and law, including by anticipating and preventing problems and avoiding major disputes. His clients - spanning Fortune 500 corporations, middle-market companies, and high-growth enterprises across a broad array of industries - rely on his ability to pair aggressive courtroom advocacy with pragmatic day-to-day guidance, allowing them to address workforce issues before they escalate while standing ready to litigate decisively when the situation demands it.

Representative Matters

- Successfully negotiated and litigated numerous high-level employee severance disputes.
- Handled dozens of noncompete, trade secret and unfair competition matters on behalf of former employers as well as former employees and new employers, including successful emergency litigation.
- Obtained no liability judgment following the arbitration of an indemnity claim under an asset purchase agreement with an eight-figure potential exposure for a manufacturing client.
- As appointed pro bono counsel, obtained a $1.75 million jury verdict for compensatory damages on a discrimination and wrongful termination claim leading to “Excellence in Pro Bono Service” Award.
- Represented business clients in cases involving unfair competition, tortious interference, and other business torts, as well as Lanham Act and Deceptive Trade Practices Act claims.

- Represented financial institutions and other consumer businesses in consumer class actions and litigation brought under various statutory schemes applicable to consumer and financial transactions.
- Obtained no liability judgment following trial on behalf of former bank executives accused of trade secret misappropriation and other business torts.
- Obtained no liability judgment in favor of client following bankruptcy court trial of a high six-figure preference and fraudulent conveyance claim.

Credentials

EDUCATION

- University of Illinois College of Law, 1994, J.D., *magna cum laude*
- Duke University, 1990, A.B.

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

- Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

Memberships

- Member, American Bar Association
- Member, Chicago Bar Association
- Member, Federal Bar Association

News & Insights

- Illinois Employers Take Note: Expanded Requirements Under the Illinois Workplace Transparency Act Go into Effect in 2026
  October 27, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Illinois Employers Take Note: Several New Requirements for Illinois Employers in 2025
  January 13, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- FTC Appeals Noncompete Ban Ruling
  October 22, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights

- Illinois Employers Take Note: New Pay Transparency Requirements Go into Effect in 2025
  October 16, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Texas District Court Permanently Blocks FTC Non-Compete Ban - Companies No Longer Need to Worry (For Now)
  August 21, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights
- The FTC Rule To Ban Non-Competes is (Maybe) 30 Days Away - What You Need To Know and What You (May) Want To Do
  August 5, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Preliminary Injunction Partially Blocks FTC Noncompete Ban
  July 3, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Benesch Healthcare+ Nephrology & Dialysis Conference Panel Key Take Aways - Noncompete Update and Case Study
  June 24, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights
- FTC Update
  May 13, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Court Sets Deadline for FTC's Response to Chamber's Motion to Enjoin Non-Compete Rule - Companies Should Know What to Do, if anything, Regarding the Rule in June
  April 29, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights

Speaking & Events

PAST EVENTS

- HR in 2025: Navigating Employment Law Challenges | Charles B. Leuin
  June 17, 2025 | Firm Events
- Benesch Healthcare+ Nephrology and Dialysis Webinar
  October 15, 2020 | Firm Events
- 5 Essential Areas of the COVID-19 Response for Nephrology and Dialysis Providers
  March 31, 2020 | Speaking Engagement
- HR 2020: New Year, New Employment Law
  February 25, 2020 | Firm Events
- Implicit Bias, Diversity and Inclusion, and Civility | Margo Wolf O'Donnell and Charles B. Leuin
  October 29, 2019 | Speaking Engagement