Rachel Chatman

Practice Attorney

San Francisco
T 628.600.2240
rchatman@beneschlaw.com

Overview

Rachel has significant experience representing a wide range of clients in high-stakes consumer, contract and other commercial litigation, including in both consumer-facing and business-to-business disputes. Her experience includes representing employers in wrongful termination, discharge, employment discrimination, wage/hour, wrongful discharge and breach of contract claims, with a focus on California-specific claims.

In addition, she has extensive experience in counseling clients on compliance and regulatory issues. She handles litigation and regulatory enforcement matters at all stages, including through jury and bench trials and arbitration, as well as resolving cases informally through mediation and settlement conferences. She also advises clients on pre-litigation compliance and litigation risk management.

Rachel is particularly well-versed in California employment litigation; she has defended companies from small businesses to large, multinational corporations in labor and employment law matters involving individual claims, as well as those including class action and representative claims. Rachel is readily familiar with the complexities of California law governing employers, including the intricacies of the Labor Code, the Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) and the ever-changing landscape of employment arbitration agreements. Her ability to navigate these and other nuances unique to California employment law, combined with her years of experience, allows Rachel to provide sound legal analysis and design litigation defense strategies consistent with her client's specific business objectives.

Another of Rachel's unique areas of focus is Proposition 65 matters, where she has experience not only representing clients in litigation but also providing solution-oriented advice and counsel on compliance and risk management issues. Rachel also advises clients on retail issues, such as weights and measures, unfair business practices and false advertising claims.

Rachel has spent most of her 20-plus year career in private practice, but before joining Benesch, she spent several years in government practice. She worked in the general counsel's office at AC Transit and later as a deputy city attorney in the city of Berkeley, where she was in charge of all third-party tort claims against the city and advised various city departments on a broad range of matters.This experience gives her a unique perspective that provides valuable insight to her clients, particularly when dealing with government agencies and regulatory compliance issues.

Rachel founded and created Benesch's Black Employee-Led Resource Group (ERG). She is chair of the committee and focuses on cultivating a culture of diversity and inclusion at all levels of the firm.

Credentials

EDUCATION

- University of Michigan Law School, J.D.
- UCLA, MEd
- University of California – Berkeley, English

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

- California
- U.S. District Court for the Central District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Memberships

- Member, Black Women Lawyers of Northern California
- Member, California Minority Counsel Program
- Past Board Member, Black Women Lawyers of Northern California
- Past Board of Governors Member, California Women Lawyers
- Judicial Nominee Evaluation Commission, California State Bar (2012-2014)
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (volunteer advocate for children in foster care)
- Past Board Member, Sunset Youth Services

News & Insights

- Federal Judge Enjoins New Prop 65 Lawsuits for Acrylamide in Food: Requiring A Cancer Warning In the Face of Scientific Uncertainly May Violate the First Amendment
  April 9, 2021 | Client Alerts & Insights

Speaking & Events

PAST EVENTS

- What Can Be Done to Stop Over Warnings | Rachel Chatman
  September 18, 2023 | Speaking Engagement