

Juan Carlos Varela

Shareholder

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Focus Areas

International Employment Law
Littler X-celerator Toolkits

Overview

Juan Carlos Varela is a lawyer with an impressive educational background, holding law degrees in four different countries, three international master's degrees, and a wealth of knowledge in diverse areas of the law. His areas of practice encompass federal and Florida State law in the United States, as well as international private law. He has substantial experience dealing with cross-border legal issues, ensuring compliance with international regulations, and facilitating the resolution of complex legal disputes.

He focuses his practice in several key areas:

International Employment and Labor

Juan Carlos is a legal adviser of the United States of America Employer Delegation to the International Labor Organization Conference in Geneva.

On the international front, Juan Carlos provides strategic advice and counsel to multinational employers on a wide range of international employment and compliance matters, including:

- Global workforce (remote workers, independent contractors, expatriates)
- Global mobility programs and expatriate workforces
- The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- Labor obligations under free trade agreements
- Multicountry and international surveys on employment laws and practices

- Global codes of conduct and international policies

Business Restructuring and M&A

He served as leading counsel on the labor and employment component of the global acquisition of one of the largest telecommunication companies in the world. He also served as leading counsel designing and implementing complex company restructuring, country exit plans, and foreign government negotiations, and has advised Fortune 50 corporations in several countries.

A main area of Juan Carlos's practice is handling labor and employment matters related to complex business transactions, mergers, and acquisitions. Juan Carlos has a deep understanding of transactional law and comprehensive knowledge of relevant corporate, securities, and contract laws. On his transactional practice, Juan Carlos meticulously reviews financial records, contracts, intellectual property, regulatory compliance, litigation history, and other relevant documents to provide clients with a clear picture of the risks and opportunities involved in a transaction. His strong project management skills are key to effectively coordinating with clients, other legal teams, financial advisors, and other stakeholders involved in these transactions.

Contingent Workforce

He provides legal support in contingent workforce-related disputes, including litigation and arbitration proceedings. He was leading counsel on the incorporation and structuring of one of the largest Global Employer of Record agencies.

Juan Carlos devotes a good portion of his time to contingent workforce matters. He offers legal advice on employment contracts, independent contractor agreements, and temporary staffing arrangements. He interprets labor laws, employment regulations, and relevant statutes to guide clients in developing compliant workforce solutions to mitigate risks and ensure adherence to labor laws and employment regulations. Juan Carlos evaluates and advises on the proper classification of workers as employees or independent contractors based on applicable legal criteria.

Privacy and Data Protection

He served as leading counsel in the creation of a Fortune 10 oil and gas corporation's global privacy and data protection policy.

Juan Carlos has considerable knowledge of global and domestic data privacy laws and background check regulations and helps ensure clients' compliance with privacy requirements. He offers authoritative guidance on GDPR, CCPA, HIPAA, and other relevant data privacy frameworks. Juan Carlos regularly helps clients develop data protection strategies, collaborating with their legal and compliance teams to design and implement tailored and effective solutions. He conducts privacy impact assessments (PIAs) to identify potential risks and ensure data protection compliance. Juan

Carlos promotes awareness and understanding of data privacy best practices and provides guidance on the handling of data breach incidents.

Unfair Competition and Trade Secrets

His experience includes serving as leading counsel handling complex litigation, enforcing noncompete agreements, and obtaining injunctions in different jurisdictions for a Fortune 100 pharmaceutical company.

Juan Carlos advises clients on best practices for protecting trade secrets and confidential information, handles all aspects of trade secrets misappropriation cases, and pursues legal action against parties who unlawfully use or disclose trade secrets. He provides legal guidance on trademarks, copyrights, and patents, and conducts risk assessments. He advises on compliance measures and assists in developing internal policies to prevent unfair competition and protect trade secrets. He advises employers on the implications and enforceability of restrictive covenants, and handles cases involving unfair competition practices, such as misappropriation of trade secrets, breach of fiduciary duties, and tortious interference claims.

Whistleblowing, Compliance, and Investigations

He served as leading counsel representing one of the largest cruise corporations of the world dealing with a whistleblower investigation involving sexual harassment allegations in five different jurisdictions.

Juan Carlos advises clients on laws protecting whistleblowers, such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX), Dodd-Frank Act, and other relevant statutes. He provides legal support and advocacy for employees who have experienced retaliation for reporting misconduct and assists clients in developing and implementing robust compliance programs that align with labor laws, industry standards, and best practices. Conducts compliance audits to identify potential risks and advise on remediation measures. He also leads internal investigations into alleged workplace misconduct, including harassment, discrimination, and ethical violations.

Recognition

- Named, Labour and Employment, *Chambers Latin America*, 2014-2017, 2025
- Named, The Best Lawyers in America®, 2018-2019, 2025
- Named, Best Lawyers in Venezuela®, 2014-2020
- Named, Leading Lawyer in Venezuela, *Legal 500 Latin America*, 2015-2016
- Named, Latin America's Top 100 Lawyers, *Latinvex*, 2016-2017
- Named, International Who's Who of Management Labour and Employment Lawyers, *Who's Who Legal*, 2015
- Named, World's Leading Business Lawyers, Corporate/M&A, Venezuela, *Chambers Global*, 2014
- Named, Excellence in Client Service, *Client Choice International*, 2013
- LACCA Approved, Labour, *Latin America Corporate Counsel Association*, 2020-2021

Education

J.D., University of Miami, 2019

LL.M., University of Miami, 2019

LL.M., University of Miami, 2011

LL.M., University of Illinois, 1995, *summa cum laude*

J.D., Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, VZ, 1992, *cum laude*

Bar Admissions

Venezuela

Colombia

Florida

Courts

Supreme Tribunal of Justice of Venezuela

Supreme Court of Justice of Colombia

Languages

Spanish

English

Portuguese

Publications & Press

Little Recognized in 2025 Chambers Latin America Guide

Little Press Release

August 22, 2024

Employment Contracts in the Americas

Little Podcast

March 31, 2023

Return to Work: Challenges and Practical Recommendations

Little Podcast

February 28, 2023

2023 Outlook of the Americas – Prepare Your Workforce for a Year of Challenges

Little Podcast

February 2, 2023

Little Ranked in Chambers Latin America Guide 2023

Little Press Release

August 26, 2022

Little Elects Four New Members to 2022 Board of Directors

Little Press Release

January 31, 2022

A Global Vision and the American Dream

Little Podcast

October 4, 2021

Little's APAC Employment & Labor Law 2021 Series: Remote Workers in Asia versus Latin America

Little Podcast

March 11, 2021

Little's APAC Employment & Labor Law 2021 Series: Asia's Focus on LATAM and Putting Workers On the Ground

Little Podcast

March 9, 2021

Little Attorneys in Venezuela Earn Best Lawyers® Recognition

Little Press Release

December 6, 2019

Little Lightbulb: Highlighting Five Recent Developments in Latin America

Little Insight

September 17, 2019

Little Attorneys in Mexico and Venezuela Named to 2019 Best Lawyers® List

Little Press Release

December 5, 2018

Best Lawyers in America® 2019 Edition Honors More Than 200 Little Lawyers

Little Press Release

August 15, 2018

Little Attorneys Named in 2018 Who's Who Legal Labour, Employment & Benefits Guide

Little Press Release

June 5, 2018

Some Big Law Firms Hang On in Turbulent Venezuela

The American Lawyer

May 21, 2018

Littler Global Guide - Venezuela - Q1 2018

Littler Global Guide Quarterly

April 23, 2018

Littler Attorneys in Mexico and Venezuela Earn Best Lawyers© Recognition

Littler Press Release

December 1, 2017

Littler Attorneys Named in 2017 Who's Who Legal Guide

Littler Press Release

September 28, 2017

Littler Ranks in The Legal 500 Latin America 2017 and Chambers and Partners Latin America 2018 Guides

Littler Press Release

September 22, 2017

Best Lawyers in America© 2018 Edition Honors More Than 200 Littler Lawyers

Littler Press Release

August 17, 2017

Best Lawyers® Recognizes Littler Mexico and Venezuela Attorneys

Littler Press Release

December 12, 2016

Pensions & Retirement Plans 2016

Getting the Deal Through

May 1, 2016

Latin America's Top 100 Lawyers

Latinvex

January 13, 2016

Littler Attorneys Recognized in Best Lawyers Mexico© and Best Lawyers Venezuela©

Littler Press Release

October 21, 2015

Approach to Employment and Labour Issues Must Suit Jurisdiction, Say Panellists

Latin Lawyer

September 14, 2015

Little Attorneys Included in Best Lawyers in Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia© 2015 Editions

Little Press Release

October 6, 2014

HR Americas: Trends, tips and discussion on managing talent in the Americas

WorldCity

November 16, 2013

Little Earns Top Rankings From U.S. News and Best Lawyers

Little Press Release

November 5, 2013

Venezuela: Useful online resources on employment law

XpertHR

November 2013

Nueva Ley Contra la Corrupción de Brasil: Todo lo que un Empleador Multinacional Debe Saber

Little Insight

August 22, 2013

Brazil's New Anti-Corruption Law: What Every Multinational Employer Should Know

Little Insight

August 22, 2013

Colombia Adopts Regulations to Implement its Data Protection Laws

Little Insight

July 29, 2013

Colombia Adopts Normas Sobre la Protección de Datos Personales

Little Insight

July 29, 2013

Venezuela Employers Beware: New Regulations Establish Additional Wage and Hour Requirements

Little Insight

May 24, 2013

Alerta a los Empleadores Venezolanos: Nuevo Reglamento Establece Requisitos Adicionales a la Jornada Laboral y Días de Descanso

Little Insight

May 24, 2013

The 2012 Global Employer: Highlights of Littler's Fifth Annual Global Employer Institute

Little Report

February 21, 2013

Outsourcing in Latin America

Latin American Law & Business Report

July 1, 2012

The 2011 Global Employer: Highlights of Littler's Fourth Annual Global Employer Institute

Little Report

February 15, 2012

Reforma Parcial del Reglamento de la Ley de Alimentación para los Trabajadores y Trabajadoras

Little Insight

July 18, 2011

Littler Mendelson Opens First International Office in Venezuela

Little Press Release

October 18, 2010

Speaking Engagements

Understanding Argentina under Milei's Revolutionary Changes

December 3, 2024

Inteligencia Artificial - Implicaciones para la Fuerza Laboral

July 3, 2024

Artificial Intelligence - Implications for the Labor Force

July 2, 2024

Employment Law Update

Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ

May 9, 2024

From Myth to Reality: Addressing the Strategies for Consistency in Handbooks Globally

Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ

May 8, 2024

Doing Business in the Americas: Session 2 | Labor and Employment Compliance

April 19, 2023

Doing Business in the Americas: Session 1 | Florida as the Gateway to the Americas

January 18, 2023

How to Lead an International Internal Investigation: Cross-Border Compliance and Strategies

May 24, 2022

Exposure Under the New EU “Whistleblower Directive” and Beyond: How to Comply with the World’s Emerging Whistleblower Anti-Retaliation and Hotline Mandates

Littler Executive Employer Conference

May 5, 2022

Unique Considerations for Engaging Freelancers in APAC and LATAM

April 28, 2022

Unique Considerations for Engaging Freelancers in APAC and LATAM

April 27, 2022

International Wandering Workers: Avoiding the Legal Pitfalls for Multinational Employers

April 8, 2021

Not All Who Wander Are Lost: Managing Employee Relocation in the Era of Remote Work

March 11, 2021

Sexto Foro Regional de Derecho Laboral

Panama City

September 20, 2019

Venezuela: Political, Economic and Legal Outlook

Boleita, Caracas

April 2, 2019

Venezuela Overview: New Financial Reforms

Boleita, Caracas

October 3, 2018

Visión General de Venezuela: Nuevas Reformas Financieras

Boleita, Caracas
October 3, 2018

Labor and Employment Outlook 2017: Companies of Today for the Venezuela of Tomorrow

Boleita, Caracas
February 23, 2017

Perspectivas Laborales 2017: Empresas del presente para la Venezuela del futuro

Boleita, Caracas
February 23, 2017

Inaugural Europe Conference - Germany

Berlin
November 10, 2016

Régimen Laboral Transitorio y Obligatorio en Venezuela

August 22, 2016

Mandatory Transitory Labor Regime in Venezuela

August 22, 2016

The Art of Global Restructuring and Global Workforce Integration

May 5, 2016

Brazil: Country Outlook for 2016

February 26, 2016

Venezuela Labor Outlook 2016

Boleita, Caracas
February 24, 2016

Perspectivas Laborales 2016 - Venezuela

Boleita, Caracas
February 24, 2016

Latin America HR Challenges and Solutions

Latin America Employee Relations Group, Miami, FL
February 25-26, 2016

Venezuela: Country Outlook for 2016

January 28, 2016

Little Global Primera Conferencia en México y Monterrey

W Ciudad de México Calle Campos Elíseos 252, Miguel Hidalgo, Polanco, 11560 México, Distrito Federal
November 11, 2015

Little Global Mexico Conference

W Mexico City Calle Campos Elíseos 252, Miguel Hidalgo, Polanco, 11560 Mexico City, D.F., Mexico
November 11, 2015

Little Global Primera Conferencia en México y Monterrey

NH Collection Monterrey Av. José Vasconcelos 402, Valle de Santa Engracia, 66268 San Pedro Garza García, NL, México
November 10, 2015

Little Global Mexico Conference

NH Collection Monterrey Av Jose Vasconcelos 402, Valle de Santa Engracia, 66268 San Pedro Garza García, NL, Mexico
November 10, 2015

Little Global Colombia Conference

Bogotá
September 10, 2015

Labor Update

Boleita, Caracas
May 27, 2015

Latin America Labor & Employment Law Update

April 29, 2015

Labor Market and Global Mobility

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
February 27, 2015

Perspectivas Laborales 2015

Boleita, Caracas
February 24, 2015

Labor & Employment Issues: Three Things an Employer Should Master for Success in Latin America

Miami, FL
November 13, 2014

Hiring and firing: Save your multinational millions by taking precautions and avoiding “rookie” mistakes

Miami, FL

November 7, 2014

Compliance and Liability Fundamentals

Association of Corporate Counsel, South Florida Chapter

May 2, 2014

Critical Changes to the Labor Landscape in Latin America and the Implications for U.S. Employers

Dallas, TX

April 4, 2013

Employment Agreements, Restrictive Covenants, and Trade Secrets: A Review for Multinational Employers

March 28, 2013

Critical Changes to Mexico and Venezuela’s Labor Landscape and the Implications for U.S. Employers

Houston, TX

January 29, 2013

Out & About: LGBT Issues and the Globally Mobile Workforce

Little Mendelson, Washington D.C.

November 9, 2012

Sustainable Innovations for a Changing Global Workforce

Little Mendelson, Washington D.C.

November 8, 2012

Protecting Your Operations in Latin America: Risks and Opportunities in the Region’s Current Legal Landscape

Little Mendelson, Washington D.C.

November 8, 2012

Nueva Ley del Trabajo en Venezuela

Boleita, Caracas

July 17, 2012

New Labor Law In Venezuela

Boleita, Caracas

June 29, 2012

Doing Business South of the Border

Little Mendelson, Scottsdale, AZ

May 10, 2012

Books & Book Chapters

- Pensions & Retirement Plans - Venezuela, *Getting the Deal Through*, Law Business Research Ltd., chapter author, 2013 and 2014