



Jennifer Chierek Znosko

Shareholder

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Focus Areas

Hiring, Performance Management and Termination
Policies, Procedures and Handbooks
Discrimination and Harassment
Staffing, Independent Contractors and Contingent Workers
Wage and Hour
Drugs and Alcohol
Littler Pay Equity Assessment

Overview

Jennifer C. Znosko is an experienced employment attorney whose practice extends to numerous areas of employment counseling and litigation. As a seasoned attorney and former human resources professional, Jen brings a unique and valuable perspective to any employment or personnel challenges faced by her clients.

Policies, Procedures and Handbooks/Hiring, Performance Management and Termination

The primary focus of Jen’s employment practice is partnering with clients to address workplace challenges. As a Core Member of Littler’s Drug & Alcohol Testing Practice Group, Jen regularly advises employers with respect to compliance with various drug testing and marijuana statutes, as well as the development of compliant drug and alcohol testing and drug-free workplace policies. In the ever-changing landscape of state laws with respect to medical marijuana, recreational marijuana, and drug and alcohol testing, Jen assists employers with all aspects of compliance. Jen has also counseled employers locally in Missouri, and the St. Louis metropolitan area regarding issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including stay at home orders, ongoing workplace restrictions, and return of employees to the workplace. In addition, Jen regularly advises employers on other human resources matters, including:

- Maintaining a compliant hiring process

- Administering discipline
- Conducting investigations
- Discharging employees, including reductions-in-force
- Responding to requests for leaves of absence under the Family Medical Leave Act
- Navigating requests for accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Reviewing and revising employee handbooks and other policy manuals
- Maintaining and administering drug testing policies

As a former human resources professional, Jen partners with her clients and provides practical solutions to workforce management challenges encountered by employers. She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources® (PHR) by the Human Resources Certification Institute.

Discrimination and Harassment

In addition to her advice and counseling practice, Jen regularly litigates discrimination and retaliation claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Missouri Human Rights Act and the Illinois Human Rights Act in federal courts and state courts in Missouri and Illinois. She has handled all stages of the litigation process including:

- Formulating defense strategies
- Taking and defending depositions
- Preparing and arguing dispositive motions
- Representing employers at mediation and negotiating settlements

Jen has conducted fact investigations, prepared position statements, represented witnesses during agency interviews, and represented employers during fact-finding conferences and mediations before administrative agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Missouri Commission on Human Rights and the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

Wage and Hour

Jen also has extensive experience in wage and hour law including:

- Client Counseling - Counseling clients on pay practices that comply with the requirements of Missouri, Illinois, and federal law, and the implementation of practices that reduce the risks of wage and hour disputes
- Audits - Conducting audits and providing counseling advice related to the proper classification of employees as exempt under the FLSA, including the new white collar regulations that were scheduled to go into effect in December of 2016
- Litigation - Defending employers in class/collective actions asserting minimum wage and overtime claims and misclassification claims under the Missouri Minimum Wage Law and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

- Contingent Workforce - Litigating numerous lawsuits in various federal district courts regarding the proper classification of workers as independent contractors or employees, and counseling clients regarding the benefits and risks in maintaining a contingent workforce

Notably, Jen obtained dismissal of straight time claims under the FLSA asserted by plaintiffs in two different collective/class action lawsuits pending in the District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. In one of these cases, the judge also granted a motion for decertification of a conditionally-certified collective under the FLSA.

Representative Industries

Jen has experience working with clients in numerous national and global industries, including:

- Telecommunications
- Healthcare
- Logistics and distribution
- Retail
- Nonprofit
- Manufacturing

Professional Experience

After law school, Jen served as a law clerk for the Hon. Mary R. Russell of the Supreme Court of Missouri. While at the University of Missouri School of Law, she was the managing editor of the *Missouri Law Review*, and a member of the regional mock trial and regional moot court teams.

Professional and Community Affiliations

- Member, Missouri Bar
- Member, Illinois State Bar Association
- Member, Labor and Employment Law Section, Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis
- National Legal Counsel, Alpha Phi Omega
- Member, Board of Directors, Alpha Phi Omega
- President, Board of Directors, Webster Child Care Center
- Chair, Human Resources Committee, Webster Child Care Center
- Member, St. Peter Catholic Church

Recognition

- Recipient, Up & Coming Award, *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*, 2016
- Named, Super Lawyer, Missouri and Kansas, *Super Lawyers*, 2013 and 2014
- Named, Rising Star, Missouri and Kansas, *Super Lawyers*, 2011 and 2012
- Order of the Barristers

Education

J.D., University of Missouri School of Law, 2004

B.A., Washington University in St. Louis, 1999

Bar Admissions

Missouri

Illinois

Courts

U.S. Supreme Court

U.S. Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri

U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri

U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois

Publications & Press

Missouri Law Requires Leave for Victims of Domestic Violence

SHRM Online

September 16, 2021

New Missouri Law Requires Employers to Provide Unpaid Leave & Other Accommodations for Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence

Littler ASAP

September 13, 2021

Alabama Legalizes Medical Marijuana While Allowing Employers Discretion as to Participating Workers

Littler ASAP

May 26, 2021

New Mexico Will Join the Growing List of States Where Recreational Marijuana is Legal

Littler ASAP

April 19, 2021

Employers can mandate COVID vaccines in return to workplace, legal experts says

KMOX Radio

April 16, 2021

Rhode Island Supreme Court Upholds Dismissal of Driver Who Refused Reasonable Grounds Drug Test

Littler Insight

June 26, 2020

Missouri and the St. Louis Region Get Back to Work: Business Guidelines, Practical Considerations, and Resources

Littler Insight

May 13, 2020

What Employers Need to Know About the Newly Issued “Stay Home Missouri” Order and COVID-19 Resources for Missouri Businesses

Littler ASAP

April 5, 2020

State and Local COVID-19 Orders Affecting the St. Louis Region – What Does This Mean for Employers?

Littler ASAP

March 22, 2020

NJ Supreme Court Holds Medical Marijuana Use Outside of the Workplace is Protected Under State Law and Employers are Required to Accommodate After-Hours Use

Littler Insight

March 16, 2020

Illinois Legislature Amends Marijuana Law, Bringing Clarity, Relief to Employers with Workplace Drug-Testing Programs

Littler Insight

November 22, 2019

Littler Elevates 28 Attorneys

Littler Press Release

January 2, 2019

Speaking Engagements

VESSA: Missouri’s Newest Employee Leave Law

St. Louis, MO

December 2, 2021

Ethical Issues and Best Practices for Workplace Investigations

Missouri Employment Conference

May 12, 2021

Ethical Issues & Best Practices for Workplace Investigations

Missouri Employment Conference
May 12, 2021

Rehab Roundup: Discrimination and Leave Compliance Issues When Managing Employees With Substance Addictions

SHRM St. Louis Annual Legal Update
February 17, 2021

Moving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programs Forward

November 10, 2020

Return to Work in Missouri – What Employers Need to Know to Manage the Next Phase of the COVID-19 Pandemic

May 12, 2020

When the Smoke Clears: The Realities of Marijuana and the Workplace in Missouri and Other Midwestern States

Missouri Employment Conference
May 6, 2020

When the Smoke Clears: The Realities of Marijuana and the Workplace in Missouri and Other Midwestern States

SHRM St. Louis Annual Legal Update
February 19, 2020

Navigating the Choppy Waters of Illinois' New Wave of Employment Laws

January 14, 2020

Marijuana and the Workplace in Illinois and Nevada: Preparing for the New 2020 Marijuana Laws

December 9, 2019

Top 10 Wage & Hour Mistakes That Employers Still Make and What To Do About Them

Missouri Employment Conference
May 1, 2019

Redefining Employment Relationships & Responsibilities in the Gig Economy

SHRM St. Louis Annual Legal Update
February 13, 2019

The Littler State and Federal Legal Update – Wage & Hour Update

Littler St. Louis Employment & Labor Law Conference
October 3, 2018

St. Louis Women's Leadership Initiative Luncheon

St. Louis, MO
August 15, 2018

Weed at Work: Are Marijuana Users the Newest Protected Class?

Missouri SHRM Conference, Lakes of the Ozarks, MO
August 9, 2018

Avoiding Legal Landmines: An Employer's Guide to Lawful Recruitment & Hiring

AAIM Employer Organization, St. Louis, MO
June 29, 2018

Employee Handbook Do's and Don'ts: Best Practices to Avoid Common Pitfalls

Human Resources Management of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
February 21, 2018

Strategies for Addressing Sexual Harassment Complaints: Elevating Your Corporate Culture by Embracing a Zero Tolerance Position on Sexual Harassment and Empowering Employees to Speak Up

Webinar - HireLevel
December 6, 2017

Weed at Work: Are Marijuana Users the Next Newest Protected Class?

ILEA, St. Louis, MO
November 16, 2017

What Every Attorney Should Know: Labor, Employment & Tax under the New State & Federal Administrations – The Current Status of Federal Wage & Hour Law

Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis CLE, St. Louis, MO
October 4, 2017

2017 Brings Sweeping Changes to Federal and State of Missouri Labor and Employment Laws

St. Louis, MO
June 8, 2017

Effective Wage and Hour Audits: An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure

Human Resources Management Association of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
February 15, 2017

Preparing for the New Overtime Rule: Final Considerations About Policies, Procedures and Training

Webinar - HireLevel
September 14, 2016

Preparing for the New Overtime Rule: Communication About Reclassification Decisions

Webinar - HireLevel
August 3, 2016

Preparing for the New Overtime Rule: Considerations & Challenges in the Reclassification Process

Webinar - HireLevel
July 13, 2016

Preparing for Change: DOL's Final Rule on Overtime

Webinar - HireLevel
June 8, 2016

Avoiding Legal Claims in the Hiring Process

2016 IPMA-HR Central Region Conference, St. Louis, MO
June 6, 2016

Working on Overtime: Preparing for DOL's Changes to the FLSA Overtime Regulations

Human Resources Management Association of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
February 17, 2016

The New DOL Wage & Hour Regulations: Challenges and Opportunities

St. Louis Association of Corporate Counsel, St. Louis, MO
October 1, 2015

Defending the Discriminator – Ethical and Other Issues Associated With Joint Representation

June 2, 2015

Avoiding the Biggest Pitfalls of HR Investigations

Human Resources Management Association of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
February 18, 2015

What Every HR Professional Needs to Know About the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act

Human Resources Management Association of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
March 20, 2014