



Sarah N. O'Keefe

Of Counsel

Camelback Esplanade
2425 East Camelback Road, Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85016
main: (602) 474-3600
direct: (602) 474-3629
fax: (602) 957-1801
sokeefe@littler.com



Focus Areas

Litigation and Trials
Investigations
Discrimination and Harassment
Occupational Safety and Health
Leaves of Absence and Disability Accommodation
Whistleblowing, Compliance and Investigations
Unfair Competition and Trade Secrets
Staffing, Independent Contractors and Contingent Workers

Overview

Sarah N. O'Keefe has extensive experience defending employers in all aspects of litigation, and has completed multiple trials. She defends employers against claims of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, whistleblowing, misclassification, wrongful termination, breach of contract, defamation, and negligent hiring, training, supervision, and retention. She counsels and trains employers in best practices, compliance, and personnel matters, routinely partnering with multiple stakeholders, including operations, HR, investigations, leadership, finance, ethics, and compliance to guide employers through their labor and employment challenges. Additionally, Sarah works with employers in workplace safety and health, assisting employers with pre-injury and illness preventative practices, including site inspections, policy development, and incidents relating to OSHA inspections. She also has experience managing catastrophic workplace accidents and fatalities. Sarah's practice includes counseling clients on managing risk regarding workforce design and maximizing contingent worker options while ensuring compliance, and joint employment exposures.

In her practice, Sarah:

- Represents employers and management in state and federal courts, for trials and appeals regarding various labor and employment issues, such as claims under the Arizona Civil Rights Act, Arizona Fair Wages and Healthy

Families Act, Arizona Employment Protection Act, Family Medical Leave Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act

- Defends employers before administrative agencies, including state and federal agencies, such as OSHA and state plan states, Arizona Civil Rights Division, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and National Labor Relations Board
- Conducts internal and external investigations to assess risk and minimize liability
- Provides advice and counsel on numerous areas of law, including policies and procedures, hiring, performance management and termination, pre-employment screening, background checks, drug and alcohol testing, probable cause testing, covenants not to compete, nonsolicitation agreements, employment agreements, investigations, federal and state wage and hour issues, reductions in force, leaves and accommodations, paid sick time laws and regulations, ban-the-box, privacy, litigation avoidance, and risk management
- Drafts handbooks, employment contracts, policies and procedures, and severance agreements
- Counsels management regarding human resources issues, including hiring, policies and procedures, training, disciplinary matters, leaves, and terminations
- Strategizes layoffs, restructuring, and acquisitions
- Drafts and enforces restrictive covenants, including noncompete, nonsolicit, and confidentiality agreements
- Advises employers on grievances and labor relations, conducts labor relations training sessions, and defends unfair labor practices
- Conducts and facilitates training to managers and supervisors regarding human resources best practices, diversity and inclusion, investigation best practices, anti-discrimination, -harassment and -retaliation

Sarah has experience advising employers in the following industries:

- National retailers
- Staffing firms
- Call centers
- Professional employer organizations
- Financial institutions
- Healthcare
- Home health and home care
- Construction
- Transportation
- Government
- Schools
- Manufacturers and distributors
- Aviation

Before joining Littler, Sarah clerked for the Hon. Patricia K. Norris at the Arizona Court of Appeals and worked in private practice.

Professional and Community Affiliations

- Member, State Bar of Arizona
- Member, Maricopa County Bar
- Member, Federal Bar Association
- Member, Arizona Women Lawyers Association
- Member, Arizona Women's Leadership Forum
- TGen Ambassador , Translational Genomics Research Institute, 2018-2019
- Member, Underdog of Arizona

Recognition

- Named, Ones to Watch, *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2021-2024
- Named, Rising Star, Arizona, *Super Lawyers*, 2019-2023
- Named, Willard H. Pedrick Scholar, *Arizona State University College of Law*

Education

J.D., Arizona State University College of Law, 2012, *cum laude*

B.S., Arizona State University, 2009, *summa cum laude*

Bar Admissions

Arizona

Courts

U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit

Arizona Supreme Court

U.S. District Court, District of Arizona

Publications & Press

Insights on hybrid work, changing regulations and evolving Arizona workforce expectations

AZ Big Media

July 24, 2023

Best Lawyers in America© 2022 Edition Honors More Than 240 Littler Lawyers

Littler Press Release

August 19, 2021

Arizona Passes Initiative to Allow Recreational Marijuana Use

Littler ASAP

November 9, 2020

Best Lawyers in America© 2021 Edition Honors More Than 250 Littler Lawyers

Littler Press Release

August 20, 2020

Are you unintentionally discriminating against pregnant employees?

In Business Magazine

December 2018

Score a Home Run for Your Women-Owned Small Business

AZ Business Magazine

July/August 2018

Federal Arbitration Act - The Pros and Cons of The Supreme Court's 2018 Decision

AZ Big Media (online)

July 2018

8 Steps to Avoid a Pregnancy Discrimination Lawsuit

AZ Big Media (online)

May 2018

Non-Compete Agreements – Enforceable or Not?

AZ Big Media (online)

March 2018

3 Ways to Prevent a Weinstein Scandal

AZ Business Magazine

November 2017

What's an Attorney-Client Relationship?

Attorney at Law Magazine

November 2017

Joint Employment—Your Companies Might Not Be Separate in the Eyes of the Law

AZ Business Magazine (online)

October 2017

How to Prevent a FMLA Interference Claim in Employee Termination

AZ Business Magazine (online)

October 2017

What's an Attorney-Client Relationship?

AZ Business Magazine

March 2017

Speaking Engagements

How to Conduct Effective Workplace Investigations

January 30, 2024

2023 Arizona Regional Employer Conference

Phoenix, AZ

November 1, 2023

2021 Arizona Virtual Regional Employer Conference

Phoenix, AZ

October 12, 2021

Smart Internal Investigations in 2021: Preparing for the Worst and Hoping for the Best

Phoenix, AZ

July 28, 2021

Arizona Virtual Employer

October 20, 2020