Breanne Sheetz Martell

Shareholder

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Practice Areas

Wage and Hour
Class Action
Discrimination and Harassment
Litigation and Trials
Appellate

Overview

Breanne Martell advises and represents employers in many industries, including healthcare, transportation, restaurant, retail, technology, manufacturing, financial services, security, and franchising. She focuses her practice on defending employers in class and collective actions under federal and Washington state law, and providing practical advice and conducting audits on compliance with wage-and-hour and pay equity laws, and drafting incentive compensation plans including commissions and bonuses. She also regularly represents employers who are facing audits and investigations by government agencies. In addition, Breanne has significant experience defending employers in discrimination, equal pay, and wrongful termination lawsuits.

Breanne's creativity and dedication have achieved positive results for her clients in numerous settings, including:

- Obtaining complete dismissal of nationwide class action allegations in a case asserting claims for misclassification and unpaid commissions under 48 states' laws
- Winning summary judgment in a case challenging a company's nationwide bonus practices with respect to calculation of the regular rate
- Obtaining complete dismissal of nationwide claims under the FLSA related to off-the-clock work for security screening on the grounds that the time was not compensable
- Obtaining dismissal of nationwide collective action allegations in an FLSA case asserting regular rate claims
- Defeating conditional certification of multiple FLSA collective actions asserting off-the-clock and regular rate claims

- Defeating class certification of employees and volunteers in multiple Washington state and federal court wage-and-hour class actions
- Prevailing on an appeal to a federal Court of Appeals in a precedent-setting win regarding a class action settlement
- Securing a complete defense verdict in a federal disability discrimination trial
- Obtaining a dismissal with prejudice on the pleadings in a federal discrimination case
- Winning summary judgment in a high-stakes race and gender discrimination case
- Winning summary judgment in a wage-and-hour case brought by a volunteer
- Persuading a state agency to dismiss a child labor citation on appeal
- Obtaining a determination of compliance from a federal agency regarding independent contractors
- Obtaining a determination of compliance from a Washington state agency regarding allegations of unpaid wages

Breanne is a member of Littler's Pro Bono Committee and Associates Committee.

Professional and Community Affiliations

- Member, Washington State Bar Association
- Member, King County Bar Association
- Member, American Bar Association
- Chair, Legal Voice Senior Workgroup

Recognition

- Named, Rising Star, Washington, *Super Lawyers*, 2014-2019
- Recipient, Special Contributions to Legal Voice, *Legal Voice*
- Recipient, Pro Bono Publico Service Commendations, *Washington State Bar Association*
- Recipient, Civic Service Award, *Seattle Jaycees*
- Recipient, E. Blythe Stason Award, *University of Michigan Law School*
- Recipient, Jeffrey Lehman Legal Practice Award, *University of Michigan Law School*
- Recipient, Yeoman Service Award, *University of Michigan Law School*

Education

J.D., University of Michigan Law School, 2007, *cum laude*
B.A., University of Puget Sound, 2001, *summa cum laude*

Bar Admissions

Washington

Courts

U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit

U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Washington
U.S. District Court, District of Colorado
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida

Publications & Press

4 State W&H Laws That Moved The Needle So Far In 2025
Law360 Employment Authority
June 24, 2025

Once a branding strategy, pay transparency is here to stay
HR Dive
May 30, 2025

Association of Washington Business and Littler's Workplace Policy Institute Support Amendment to Equal Pay & Opportunities Act
Press Release
May 9, 2025

Relief from Steep Pay Transparency Penalties for Businesses in Washington State
Littler ASAP
April 28, 2025

Pro Bono Week Podcast – Nonpartisan Election Activities
Littler Podcast
October 22, 2024

Washington State Legislative Updates
Littler ASAP
March 27, 2024

Pro Bono Week Podcast – Seeking Justice for a Neurodiverse Individual on Death Row
Littler Podcast
October 24, 2023

Pro Bono Week Podcast – Adoption in Alaska
Littler Podcast
October 25, 2022

Minding the Pay Gap: What Employers Need to Know as Pay Equity Protections Widen
Littler Report

September 2, 2022

Washington Becomes Third Jurisdiction to Require Wage Disclosures in Job Postings
Littler ASAP
May 2, 2022

Top W&H Developments For Women In The Workforce In 2021
Law360 Employment Authority
December 15, 2021

Pro Bono Week Podcast – Eight Million Stories: Appellate Work in Criminal Law
Littler Podcast
October 27, 2021

Equal Pay Act's 'Other Than Sex' Defense Meaning Still Murky
Law360 Employment Authority
July 27, 2021

Washington Amends its Equal Pay Law to Enact Salary History Ban and Require Disclosure of Salary Ranges
Littler ASAP
May 16, 2019

Seattle Passes Ordinance to Expand Employment Rights to Domestic Workers
Littler ASAP
August 27, 2018

10 Seattle Women Business Leaders Discuss the Power of Mentors
Seattle Business Magazine
April 25, 2018

New Pay Equity Law in Washington State
Littler ASAP
April 16, 2018

Littler Elevates 28 Attorneys to Shareholder
Press Release
January 3, 2018

The Current State of Meal and Rest Break Law in Washington State
Littler ASAP
October 4, 2017

New Minimum Wage and Paid Sick Leave Laws for Washington Employers
Littler ASAP
December 22, 2016

Seattle's Updated Labor Standards Requirements
Littler ASAP
March 29, 2016

Washington Piece-Rate Workers to Receive Separate Rest Breaks
Littler ASAP
July 23, 2015

Seattle's New Wage Theft Ordinance Imposes Notice Requirements and Civil Penalties
Littler ASAP
April 15, 2015

New Mexico Supreme Court Creates Additional Protections for Physicians Participating in Peer Review
Littler ASAP
March 3, 2015

California Appellate Court Refuses to Certify Meal and Rest Break Class Action
Littler ASAP
June 13, 2014

Seattle Increases Minimum Wage to $15 Per Hour Over Several Years
Littler ASAP
June 5, 2014

Challenges and Best Practices for Home Care Employers Following the Elimination of the Companionship Exemption
Littler Report
November 7, 2013

California Increases Regulation of Home Care Agencies
Littler ASAP
October 17, 2013

False Claims Act Whistleblowers Continue to Collect Large Settlements
Littler ASAP
July 24, 2013

Hospital Defeats Class Certification of Meal and Rest Break Claims
Littler ASAP

April 12, 2013

Hot Wage and Hour Issues for Home Healthcare Employers
Littler Report
March 19, 2013

Defamation Claims by Medical Providers
Littler ASAP
February 5, 2013

Washington State Supreme Court Orders Overtime Payment for Missed Breaks
Littler ASAP
November 15, 2012

Washington State Supreme Court Orders Overtime for Missed Breaks
Littler ASAP
November 15, 2012

Another Automatic Meal-Break Deduction Class Action Decertified
Littler ASAP
October 18, 2012

Hospitals Face Increasing Religious Discrimination Claims
Littler ASAP
August 2, 2012

Dismissing Hospital FLSA Collective Action, Court Rejects "Integrated Healthcare System" Claim
Littler ASAP
February 27, 2012

DOL Targets Home Health Care Provider for Payment of Flat Daily Rates
Littler ASAP
February 6, 2012

Two More FLSA Collective Actions Against Hospitals Decertified
Littler ASAP
December 29, 2011

Littler Bolsters Pacific Northwest Presence with a Group of Four New Attorneys
Press Release
September 13, 2011

The Choice to Limit Choice
40 U. Mich. J. L. Reform 401
2007

Events & Speaking Engagements

2026 Pacific Northwest Regional Employer Conference
Portland, OR
September 24, 2026

2025 Pacific Northwest Regional Employer Conference
Seattle, WA
September 11, 2025

The Room Where It Happens: Helping the C-Suite Avoid a Wage & Hour Calamity
Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ
May 8, 2025

Workshop: The Future of Pay Transparency and Pay Equity: Avoiding Landmines on the Path to Compliance
Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ
May 7, 2025

To 2025 Compensation...and Beyond!
Southwest Washington SHRM Annual Conference, Vancouver, WA
September 10, 2024

Show Me the Money! Incentivizing the Workforce of the Future
October 24, 2023

Show Me the Money! Incentivizing the Workforce of the Future
Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ
May 11, 2023

Show Me the Money: Incentivizing the Workforce of the Future
Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ
May 11, 2023

Equal Justice and the Law: Diversity & Inclusion and Equal Pay Initiatives in the Workplace
December 4, 2020

Understanding Pay Equity
Seattle, WA

November 7, 2019

Predictive Scheduling: 5 Tips to Stay Compliant
Deputy Webinar
August 6, 2019

Top Wage and Hour Compliance Tips
2019 PAC West Retailer Summit
July 18, 2019

Home Care in the Trump Era: A Practical Guide to Building Compliance
Home Care Association of Washington
April 25, 2018

Top 10 HR Strategies to Mitigate Risk & Ensure Compliance
2018 Washington State Employment Law & HR Conference - Washington State SHRM
April 20, 2018

Bring Your "A" Game: Arbitration Agreements with Class Waivers
Association of Corporate Counsel of Washington
January 25, 2018

Preparing for Change: An FLSA Seminar on the New Overtime Rule
Accounting Principals
August 10, 2016

DOL's Proposed Changes to the White Collar Regulations: What Should Employers Do Now?
Seattle, WA
February 25, 2016

The $50,440 Question
LWHRA Symposium
February 9, 2016

Top 10 Wage and Hour Compliance Tips
Seattle, WA
April 23, 2015

Conducting Lawful Investigations Workshop
Seattle, WA
September 12, 2013

Wage & Hour Boot Camp
Seattle, WA
April 9, 2013

Wage & Hour Boot Camp
Seattle, WA
March 20, 2013

Employment Law Update
Seattle, WA
January 24, 2013

Top 10 Wage and Hour Compliance Tips
August 24, 2012

2012 Wage & Hour Boot Camp – A Guide to Combating Wage & Hour Liability
Seattle, WA
March 20, 2012

New FLSA Initiatives and Issues Under the Obama Administration
Association of Washington Business
May 18, 2011

Books & Book Chapters

- *Washington State, Wage and Hour Laws: A State-by-State Survey*, BNA, co-authors: Thieme and Subit, 2011-2024
- *Handbook for Washington Seniors: Legal Rights and Resources, Legal Voice, editor-in-chief, 2012*
- *The FLSA – A User's Manual, 5th Edition, FLSA, LRIS, co-author, 2010*