



## Lavanga V. Wijekoon

Shareholder

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## Practice Areas

Business and Human Rights  
International Employment Law  
Discrimination and Harassment  
Litigation and Trials  
Inclusion, Equity and Diversity

## Overview

Lavanga V. Wijekoon has experience representing employers in a wide range of labor and employment class action and single-plaintiff matters, involving such as issues as:

- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Retaliation
- Wage and hour
- Misclassification
- Employment contracts
- Independent contractors
- Wage garnishments

Lavanga handles district and appellate level actions in state and federal courts and before agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR), and the Illinois Human Rights Commission (IHRC).

Lavanga also provides strategic advice and counsel to multinational employers on a wide range of international employment and compliance matters, including such areas as:

- Global mobility programs and expatriate workforces
- The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- Labor obligations under free trade agreements
- Multi-country and international surveys on employment laws and practices
- Global codes of conduct and international policies
- Global independent contractors
- The employment cycle including applications, interviewing, hiring, discipline, promotions, demotions, recordkeeping and terminations

Lavanga is a member of Littler's Pro Bono Committee and has an active pro bono practice in which he represents clients in asylum petitions before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and immigration courts. He has also represented numerous "Dreamer" clients in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals petitions.

Prior to joining Littler, Lavanga was an associate at an international law firm in Chicago. He also served as a law clerk to Hon. Marywave Van Deren of the Washington State Court of Appeals and as an extern to Hon. Marsha J. Pechman of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington.

While in law school, he served as an editor for the *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* and as a member of the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Court team. He was awarded grants to conduct field research on human trafficking in India and Nepal.

## Professional and Community Affiliations

- Member, Illinois State Bar Association
- Member, American Bar Association
- Member, Junior Leadership Board, National Immigrant Justice Center, 2012-present
- Member, Chicago Council on Global Affairs
- Member, Professional Board, PAWS Chicago

## Recognition

- Named, Ones to Watch, *The Best Lawyers in America®*, 2022-2025
- Named, Stand-Out Lawyer, *Thomson Reuters*, 2024
- Named, Rising Star, *National Immigrant Justice Center*, 2013
- Recipient, John H. & George V. Powell Endowed Award for Human Rights, *University of Washington School of Law*, 2006 and 2008
- Recipient, Takuji Yamashita Endowed Memorial Scholarship for Human Rights, *University of Washington School of Law*, 2008

## Education

J.D., University of Washington School of Law, 2009

M.A., Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 2009

B.A., Illinois Wesleyan University, 2004, *magna cum laude*

## Bar Admissions

Illinois

## Languages

Sinhalese

## Courts

U.S. Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Iowa

## Publications & Press

### California Imposes Disclosure Obligations for Child Labor Audits

*SHRM*

December 11, 2024

### California Law Imposes New Disclosure Obligations on Employers Conducting Voluntary Child Labor Audits

*Littler ASAP*

December 3, 2024

### What the EU's Landmark Corporate Human Rights Law Means for Global Companies

*Corporate Compliance Insights*

November 13, 2024

### Pro Bono Week Podcast – Migrant Families Seeking Asylum

*Littler Podcast*

October 23, 2024

### New Illinois Child Labor Law Brings Enhanced Workplace Rules for Minors Under 16

*SHRM*

September 10, 2024

### New Illinois Child Labor Law Brings Enhanced Workplace Rules for Minors Under 16

*Littler ASAP*

August 19, 2024

### Celebrating AANHPI Heritage Month: Innovation Leads to Growth

*Littler Podcast*

May 24, 2024

**Call-to-Action: Immigration Protections for Migrant Families in the U.S.**

*Littler Podcast*

April 26, 2024

**Are employers required to conduct human rights due diligence in their global operations?**

*Littler 2 the Point Video*

March 26, 2024

**South Korea Proposes Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence Obligations on Employers**

*Littler ASAP*

January 16, 2024

**The CSDDD Effect: Assessing the Impact of the EU's Impending Corporate Sustainability Mandate on Japanese Companies**

*Institute for Security and Development Policy*

December 5, 2023

**Pro Bono Week Podcast – Afghan Refugees**

*Littler Podcast*

October 23, 2023

**DOL Issues Guidance on the Child Labor “Hot Goods” Prohibition**

*Littler ASAP*

October 12, 2023

**DOL Issues Annual Report on Child Labor with Emphasis on Enforcement**

*Littler ASAP*

October 5, 2023

**Employers Rapidly Implement Japan’s Guidelines on Business & Human Rights**

*Littler ASAP*

September 11, 2023

**Recent Developments in South Korea’s Anti-Discrimination Laws**

*Littler ASAP*

July 5, 2023

**Canada Passes Modern Slavery Act**

*Littler ASAP*

May 17, 2023

**Seattle Becomes the First U.S. Jurisdiction to Prohibit Caste Discrimination**

*Littler ASAP*

February 28, 2023

**Pro Bono Week Podcast – National Immigrant Justice Center Asylum Case**

*Littler Podcast*

October 24, 2022

**Recent Human Rights Due Diligence Law Developments in the European Union, Switzerland, and Japan**

*Littler ASAP*

October 11, 2022

**The Fashion Industry Meets Human Rights Due Diligence: New York’s Proposed “Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act”**

*Littler ASAP*

February 14, 2022

**Littler Elevates 33 Attorneys to Shareholder**

*Press Release*

January 6, 2022

**U.S. Enacts Law Barring Products Made With Forced Labor in China**

*Littler ASAP*

January 3, 2022

**Europe and Canada Seek to Mandate Human Rights Due Diligence and Transparency Obligations on Companies and Their Global Partners**

*Littler ASAP*

October 28, 2021

**Pro Bono Week Podcast – National Immigrant Justice Center: Representing Asylum Seekers**

*Littler Podcast*

October 28, 2021

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

*Press Release*

August 19, 2021

**What is your name? A Conversation with Littler’s Immigrant Attorneys**

*Littler Podcast*

May 24, 2021

**India Enacts Major Employment Law Reforms**

*Littler ASAP*

October 20, 2020

**INDIA: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) – Employer FAQs**

*Littler ASAP*

March 22, 2020

**United Nations Takes Another Step in Developing a Treaty on Business and Human Rights**

*Littler ASAP*

November 5, 2019

**Littler Lightbulb: Highlighting Global Human Rights Topics**

*Littler ASAP*

October 15, 2019

**Germany Seeks to Mandate Human Rights Due Diligence for Companies and Their Global Partners**

*Littler ASAP*

April 25, 2019

**Australia Passes Law Requiring Large Companies to Report on Modern Slavery**

*Littler ASAP*

December 4, 2018

**United Nations Further Deliberates a Treaty Seeking to Impose Corporate Liability for Human Rights Violations**

*Littler ASAP*

November 7, 2018

**California Enacts Two Laws to Combat Human Trafficking**

*SHRM Online*

October 9, 2018

**India: Recent Developments Will Affect Diversity in the Workplace**

*SHRM Online*

October 5, 2018

**California Enacts Two Laws Aimed At Combating Human Trafficking**

*Littler ASAP*

October 2, 2018

**Key Recent Developments in Indian Employment Law Impacting Diversity in the Workplace**

*Littler ASAP*

September 24, 2018

**Littler Global Guide - Hong Kong - Q2 2018**

*Littler Global Guide Quarterly*

July 20, 2018

**Australia: New South Wales Introduces Law Requiring Companies to Report on Modern Slavery**

*Littler ASAP*

July 13, 2018

**U.S. Supreme Court Forecloses Liability of Foreign Corporations Under the Alien Tort Statute**

*Littler ASAP*

May 10, 2018

**Hong Kong Considers Draft Law Requiring Companies to Report on Modern Slavery**

*Littler ASAP*

April 16, 2018

**Canada Announces Two New Initiatives To Hold Companies Accountable For Human Rights Violations Abroad**

*Littler ASAP*

February 13, 2018

**Proposed Act Seeks to Require Large Companies Operating in Australia to Report on Modern Slavery**

*Littler ASAP*

February 6, 2018

**United Nations Continues its Development of a Treaty Imposing Liability on Companies for Human Rights Abuses**

*Littler ASAP*

November 9, 2017

**European Court Clarifies Legality of Banning Islamic Headscarves in the Workplace**

*TLNT Talent Management and HR*

April 11, 2017

**European Court Clarifies Legality of Banning Islamic Headscarves in the Workplace**

*Littler ASAP*

March 20, 2017

**Dutch and French Legislatures Introduce New Human Rights Due Diligence Reporting Requirements**

*Littler ASAP*

March 13, 2017

**New Mandatory Gender Pay Gap Disclosures Will Soon Take Effect for Large Employers in Great Britain**

*Littler ASAP*

March 13, 2017

**Advancing Human Rights Claims Based on Global Supply Chain Activities: Recent Developments in California and Canada**

*Littler ASAP*

February 15, 2017

**The U.S. Issues a National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct**

*Littler ASAP*

January 17, 2017

**Proposed French Law Would Impose New Due Diligence Obligations on Certain Employers and Their Supply Chains**

*Littler ASAP*

December 12, 2016

**Union Petition Under US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement Highlights Labor Violations in Oil and Sugar Industries in Colombia**

*ACC Docket*

July/August 2016

**U.S. Strengthens Law Prohibiting Importation of Goods Derived from Forced Labor**

*American Bar Association International Labor & Employment Law Committee Newsletter*

July 1, 2016

**The Corporate Human Rights Benchmark Ranks Large Companies' Human Rights Performance**

*Littler ASAP*

April 4, 2016

**Certain Illinois Employers Now Required to Post Human Trafficking Helpline**

*Littler ASAP*

February 8, 2016

**Potential Impact of Trans-Pacific Partnership on Employment**

*New York Law Journal*

February 5, 2016

**Annual Report on EEOC Developments – Fiscal Year 2015**

*Littler Report*

January 12, 2016



**California Consumer Protection Suits Raise Labor Violations in Global Supply Chains**

*American Bar Association International Labor & Employment Law Committee Newsletter*

January 1, 2016

**Newly Released Text of Trans-Pacific Partnership Sheds Light on Potential Labor Law Requirements**

*American Bar Association International Labor & Employment Law Committee Newsletter*

November 1, 2015

**California Laws Are Being Used to Advance Human Rights Claims Based on Global Supply Chain Activities**

*Littler ASAP*

October 14, 2015

**In Canada, Foreign Workers Seek to Use International Norms as the Standard of Care in Negligence Claims Against Multinationals Operating Overseas**

*Littler ASAP*

September 16, 2015

**Foreign Workers Seek to Use International Norms as the Standard of Care in Negligence Claims Against Multinationals Operating Overseas**

*ABA International Employment Law Newsletter*

August 1, 2015

**Annual Report on EEOC Developments - Fiscal Year 2014**

*Littler Report*

January 5, 2015

**More CNIL Guidance for Multinationals Seeking to Comply with SOX & Dodd-Frank**

*Littler ASAP*

March 4, 2014

**Litigating Labor Rights Across a Demilitarized Zone: the South Korean Constitutional Court as a Forum to Address Labor Violations in North Korea's Kaesong Special Economic Zone**

*17 Pacific Rim Law and Policy Journal 265*

January 2008

**Events & Speaking Engagements**

**Child Labor in the United States and Beyond: A Legal, Moral, and PR Nightmare for Employers**

October 2, 2024

**2024 APAC Regional Employer Conference**

Singapore

September 25, 2024

**112th International Labor Conference**

International Labour Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

June 3, 2024

**Child Labor in the United States & Beyond: A Legal, Moral, & PR Nightmare for Employers**

Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ

May 10, 2024

**Eliminating Forced Labor in your Workforce and Supply Chains - A Discussion on Traditional and Innovative Practices**

November 10, 2023

**AI Works for Your Company Even If You Don't Know It Yet**

HR Compliance Summit 2023, Warsaw, Poland

October 24, 2023

**Business & Human Rights – The Legal and Business Case for APAC Companies**

2023 APAC Regional Employer Conference, Singapore

September 28, 2023

**Cultural Competence Required! Exporting the US model for DEI to global workforces**

South Asian Bar Association Annual Conference, Boston MA

July 20-21, 2023

**Decent Work in Supply Chains**

United Nations Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia-Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand

June 8, 2023

**How Employment Law Developments in the U.S. and E.U. Impact Employers in Thailand**

Bangkok, Thailand

June 6, 2023

**What's New in Poland?**

Polish-American Chamber of Commerce, Chicago IL

May 31, 2023

**A Brave(ish) New World: The Challenges of Sustainably Managing and Engaging a Global Workforce**

Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ

May 11, 2023

**A Brave(ish) New World: The Challenges of Sustainably Managing and Engaging a Global Workforce**

Littler Executive Employer Conference, Phoenix, AZ

May 10-12, 2023

**Hot Topics in Employment Law for APAC HR/Counsel: A Focus on Business & Human Rights, Developments in Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and Retrenchments**

Singapore

October 26, 2022

**The Ins and Outs of IE&D in U.S. and Non-U.S. Jurisdictions**

June 21, 2022

**So, You Think You Are Ready for Global Inclusion, Equity and Diversity. What Now?**

February 17, 2022

**So, You Think You Are Ready for Global Inclusion, Equity and Diversity. What Now?**

February 16, 2022

**FAQs: COVID-19 Vaccinations in the APAC Region**

November 23, 2021

**Reducing Human Trafficking in the Supply Chain**

Lorman Education Services Webinar

June 22, 2021

**Spotlight on India: The Employer's Top 3 Concerns in 2021**

April 29, 2021

**Spotlight on India: The Employer's Top 3 Concerns in 2021**

April 28, 2021

**COVID-19 in the Workplace: Recent Developments and Compliance Challenges - Session 13**

April 2, 2021

**Return to Work in a COVID-19 World: U.S. and Global Perspectives**

January 21, 2021

**The Global Return to Work: How Multinational Employers Can Reintegrate Employees During COVID-19**

Clear Law Institute Webinar

September 9, 2020

**Back at Work Around the World: Cross-Border Strategies for Multinationals Returning Staff to Workplaces in the Shadow of Coronavirus**

Public Law Institute Briefing Webinar

May 28, 2020

**Back at Work Around the World: Cross-Border Strategies for Multinationals Returning Staff to Workplaces in the Shadow of Coronavirus**

Public Law Institute Briefing Webinar

May 28, 2020

**Returning to Work: Strategies and Tools for Reintegrating Employees Worldwide**

May 20, 2020

**COVID-19 and Cross-Border Workforce Cutbacks: Options and Strategies for the Retrenching Multinational**

Public Law Institute Briefing

April 27, 2020

**International Cutbacks and Reductions-in-Force in the Global Pandemic**

April 16, 2020

**Panelist, Proposed United Nations Business & Human Rights Treaty**

U.N. Human Rights Council, Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group On Transnational Corporations & Other Business Enterprises With Respect To Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland

October 14-18, 2019

**Employment Law Considerations That May Impact Your Immigration Program**

Webinar hosted by Envoy Global

February 19, 2019

**Panelist on Jurisdiction of Proposed United Nations Business & Human Rights Treaty**

U.N. Human Rights Council, Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group On Transnational Corporations & Other Business Enterprises With Respect To Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland

October 15-19, 2018

**Talking Politics in the Workplace – What Can an Employer Do?**

BB&T Webinar

April 24, 2018

**Update on the Proposed United Nations Treaty on Business & Human Rights – Webinar for Members of Global Industrial Relations Network**

International Organisation of Employers Webinar

December 6, 2017

**Panelist on Jurisdiction of Proposed United Nations Business & Human Rights Treaty**

U.N. Human Rights Council, Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group On Transnational Corporations & Other Business Enterprises With Respect To Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland

October 23-27, 2017

### **Terminating the Employee on Leave or Returning From Leave: Challenges and Best Practices**

BB&T Webinar

May 25, 2017

### **Preparing for Change: DOL's Final Rule on Overtime**

Asian American Hotel Owners Association, Inc., Upper Midwest Regional Conference & Trade Show, Elmhurst, IL  
September 22, 2016

### **The Corporate Human Rights Benchmark Ranks Large Companies' Human Rights Performance**

Littler webinar

May 12, 2016

### **Workplace Nightmares...The Employee Who Haunts Your Dreams**

Chicago, IL

October 23, 2014

### **Investigating Cross-Border Whistleblower Claims: A Challenge for Multinational Employers**

July 31, 2013

## **Books & Book Chapters**

- Sections of Chapter 21: International Labor and Employment Law, *International Corporate Practice: A Practitioner's Guide to Global Success*, Practising Law Institute, chapter co-authors: Philip Berkowitz and Trent Sutton, February 2021
- 2019 Employment Law Update, *Misplaced Efforts: The United Nations' Proposed Treaty Imposing Corporate Liability for Human Rights Violations*, Chapter 11, Wolters Kluwer, chapter co-author Michael G. Congiu, 2019
- Sri Lanka, *The Littler Mendelson Guide to Employment & Labor Law (6th Ed.)*, Chapter editor, 2019
- 2017 Employment Law Update, *Imposing Liability on Employers Under the Shadow of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights*, Chapter 4, Wolters Kluwer, chapter co-author Michael G. Congiu, 2017
- *Littler on Multinational Employers*, co-author Philip Berkowitz, 2016
- International Whistleblowing Issues, *Whistleblowing & Retaliation: A Guide for Human Resources Professionals & Counsel*, Chapter 10 author, LexisNexis, 4th Ed., 2014
- 2014 Employment Law Update, *Leveling the Playing Field: Examining Firestone Deference in Delinquent Contribution Lawsuits*, Chapter 2, Wolters Kluwer, chapter co-authors Michael G. Congiu and Stefanie H. Kastrinsky, 2014