

DETROIT

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Services

Employment and Labor
Employment Litigation
Governmental and Public
Entities
Human Resources Counseling
and Training
Environmental

Industries

Energy

Education

Wayne State University Law
School, J.D. 1999

University of Michigan-Dearborn,
B.A. 1995

Bar Admissions

Michigan

Court Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals

- Sixth Circuit

U.S. District Court

- Eastern District of Michigan



Jennifer L. Sabourin

Principal
Managing Director
Employment and Labor Deputy
Group Leader

Jennifer Sabourin advocates on behalf of employers in every step of the employment relationship. She makes it a priority to learn her clients' business in order to find the right balance of advice and counsel that allows them to meet their business needs, while also remaining compliant with state and federal employment laws. Jennifer defends employers in litigation and agency matters across the country.

She is experienced in providing national training for hourly, management, and executive-level employees; drafting employee handbooks, policies and contracts; and investigating claims of workplace discrimination, harassment, and violence. Jennifer further counsels her clients on best practices in maintaining proactive employee relationships, including hiring, evaluating, disciplining, and terminating employees. She represents employers in discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and violations of wage and hour matters pending in state and federal courts, as well as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and various state employment agencies.

Representative Matters

- Defended national bank in age discrimination and retaliation claims.

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- Represented credit union organization in disability and age discrimination litigation.
- Advised credit union service provider on nationwide employee handbooks, policies, and HR manuals.
- Provided respect in the workplace training for national bank.

Discrimination and Retaliation Claims Against Energy Company

Successfully obtained a complete no cause arbitration award in an 8-count race, age, and disability discrimination, harassment, and retaliation matter.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Claims Against Energy Company

Key member of trial team obtaining a no cause verdict on two of the three claims presented to the jury.

National Shipping Retailer Employment Litigation

Successfully argued to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals that it should affirm the trial court's complete dismissal of employee's claims for gender and age discrimination against a Fortune 500 company.

Failure to Accommodate / Disability Claims Against Energy Company

Prevailed on summary judgment and in the Michigan Court of Appeals on 4-count disability discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claim.

Age and Gender Discrimination and Retaliation Claims Against Energy Company

Obtained summary judgment on multi-count age and gender discrimination and retaliation claim. After the trial court granted a motion for reconsideration reversing the complete dismissal, Jennifer prevailed in the Michigan Court of Appeals to have the previous order granting SJ reinstated, obviating the need for trial.

Discrimination, Retaliation, and Hostile Work Environment Claims Against Energy Company

Obtained summary judgment in federal court on a 4-count claim that was pre-empted by the Labor Management Relations Act.

National Beverage Retailer Employment Litigation

Obtained summary judgment in favor of a national beverage retailer of plaintiff's claims that his employer violated his rights under the Family Medical Leave Act

Public University Employment Litigation

Core member of the litigation team that obtained summary judgment in favor of a public university of plaintiff's claims of national origin discrimination based on the Indian Caste System. Plaintiff's claims of race discrimination, religious discrimination, and retaliation were also dismissed.

Financial Institutions Employment Litigation

Obtained summary judgment of plaintiff's defamation claims on behalf of a financial institution.

National Retail Chain Employment Litigation

Obtained summary judgment in favor of a national retail chain of plaintiff's claims of race discrimination and retaliation. Jennifer successfully defended a national retail client in a race discrimination and retaliation matter brought by a terminated director-level employee and a group of vendors and suppliers. The plaintiffs' claims in this matter could best be characterized as a moving target. Once defenses were lodged to one claim, the plaintiffs sought amendments to add additional claims. This meant that discovery depositions were critical. By anticipating what additional claims the plaintiffs

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might seek to add in the future, Jennifer and her team were able to obtain damaging admissions on those unasserted claims. Not only did they get a complete dismissal of the claims, but they also successfully defended the inevitable 11th-hour motion to amend to add the claims they had anticipated in the depositions. Although the plaintiffs demanded \$4 million at a voluntary facilitation, they ended up with a complete dismissal of their claims.

Honors

Chambers USA, Labor & Employment, 2024–present

Fellow, College of Labor & Employment Lawyers

Crain's Detroit Business 2023 Notable Leaders in Employment and Labor Law

Best Lawyers in America, Labor & Employment Litigation, 2012-present; 2022 Detroit Labor & Employment Litigation Lawyer of the Year

Michigan Lawyers Weekly's Women in the Law, 2019

Michigan Super Lawyers, Employment Litigation: Defense, 2014-present; Rising Star, 2008-2013; Employment and Labor, 2025

DBusiness Magazine, Top Lawyers, Labor and Employment Law, 2021-present; Top Young Lawyers, 2013

BTI Client Service All-Star, 2017

Leading Lawyers, Employment Law: Management, 2014–present

Wayne State University Law School, Wayne Law Review, Production Editor, 1998-99; Assistant Editor, 1997-98

Professional Activities

American Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Section

- Vice Chair, 2025-present
- Council, Management Member, Aug. 2017-present
- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Planning Committee Member, 2010-present
- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Committee Management Co-Chair, Aug. 2015-Aug. 2018
- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Committee Management Program Co-Chair, 2014-2015
- National Programming Subcommittee, Employer Vice-Chair, 2012-2014
- ABA 8th Annual Section of Labor & Employment Law Conference, Los Angeles, CA, Workplace Problems & Solutions Track Coordinator, 2013-2014
- ABA 7th Annual Section of Labor & Employment Law Conference, New Orleans, LA, Litigation Track Coordinator, 2012-2013
- Fundamentals Track Coordinator, ABA 6th Annual Section of Labor & Employment Law Conference, Atlanta, GA, 2011-2012
- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Planning Committee for National Conference on Equal Employment

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Opportunity Law, San Francisco, CA 2011-2012

- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Marketing Liaison to the Labor and Employment Law Section, 2011
- Litigation Track Coordinator, ABA 5th Annual Section of Labor & Employment Law Conference, Seattle, WA, 2010-2011
- Planning Committee for National Conference on Equal Employment Opportunity Law, New Orleans, LA 2010-2011
- Member, Leadership Development Program, 2010-11
- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Employer Co-Chair of Outreach Sub-Committee, 2010
- Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, Employer Co-Chair of Mentoring Sub-Committee, 2009

Federal Bar Association, Eastern District of Michigan Chapter

State Bar of Michigan, Labor and Employment Law Section

Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Section

Women Lawyers Association of Michigan

American Employment Law Council, 2010-present, Program Vice-Chair, 2019-2021

Leadership Detroit, Class XXVII, 2005-2006

Dearborn Bar Association, President, 2003-2004; Vice President, 2002-03; Treasurer, 2001-02; 2001 Law Day Chairperson

Civic, Cultural & Social Activities

University of Michigan-Dearborn, Alumni Affiliate Board, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, 1999-2010

Boll Family YMCA, Downtown Detroit, Board of Advisors 2004-09

Michigan Migrant Legal Assistance Project, Board of Directors 1999-2004

Speeches

"The Future of DEI," Miller Canfield 2025 HR Spring Training

"From Allegation to Action: Guiding Principles for Conducting Sexual Harassment Investigations," Miller Canfield 2024 HR Spring Training

"Hiring, Recruitment and Retention for a Diverse Workforce," Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce, June 22, 2023

"What's Lawful and Unlawful in the Hiring Process," Miller Canfield 2023 HR Spring Training

"Properly Constructing and Implementing Workplace Investigations, Miller Canfield 2022 HR Fall Training Camp

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"Preventing Employment Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Issues Through Training," Miller Canfield 2021 Employment Law Webinar

"Difficult Conversations with Difficult Employees," Miller Canfield 2020 HR Spring Training: Employment Law Seminar

"Harassment post-#MeToo — to Arbitrate or Not?," American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law, 13th Annual Labor and Employment Law Conference, New Orleans, Nov. 7, 2019

"Ethics for Management Counsel," American Employment Law Council Conference, West Palm Beach, October 13, 2018

"The #MeToo Movement, What Should An Employer Do," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2018 Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, May 11, 2018

"Hiring Landmines & Best Practices," Miller Canfield 2019 HR Spring Training: Employment Law Seminar

The #MeToo Movement - What Should an Employer Do?," Miller Canfield 2018 HR Spring Training: Employment Law Seminar

"Utilizing Internal Investigations to Implement Organizational Change," Labor and Employment Law Institute, Institute for Continuing Legal Education, Plymouth, MI, April 21, 2018

"What's Happening In Washington: The Agendas of the DOL and EEOC," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2017 Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, May 9, 2017

"Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the Workplace," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2016 Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, May 10, 2016

"ADA Accommodation Workshop," Labor and Employment Law Institute, Institute for Continuing Legal Education, Plymouth, MI, April 8, 2015

"Hiring and Firing Under the EEOC's Current Agenda," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2015 Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, May 12, 2015

"Legal Issues and Safeguards Associated with Performance Evaluation Programs," American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law, 8th Annual Labor and Employment Law Conference, Los Angeles, CA, November 6, 2014

"Anatomy of a Discrimination Lawsuit: From Internal Complaint to the Filing of a Lawsuit or Charge," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2014 Labor & Employment Law Seminar, May 13, 2014

"Anatomy of a Whistleblower Retaliation Lawsuit," Labor and Employment Law Institute, Institute for Continuing Legal Education, Plymouth, MI, April 11, 2014

"Arbitration: A Universal Remedy," American Bar Association National Conference on Equal Employment Opportunity Law, Rancho Mirage, CA, March 27, 2014

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"Discipline and Discharge: Doing It Right To Protect Your Organization," February 27, 2013

"Employment Discrimination Under Title VII: The Basics," American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law, Webinar, February 26, 2014

"Workplace Investigations: Getting to the Bottom of Complex Matters Without Falling Into a Trap, American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law, 7th Annual Labor and Employment Law Conference, New Orleans, LA, November 9, 2013

"The Employment Law Relationship: Making Sound Legal Decisions," Credit Union Women's Executive Network ("CUWEN") Meeting, Southfield, MI, May 21, 2013

"Both Sides Want Out! Top Tips For Negotiating Enforceable Settlement Agreements," American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law, 6th Annual Labor and Employment Law Conference, Atlanta, GA, November 2, 2012

"Bullying & Respect in the Workplace: Taking Your Anti-Harassment Policies and Training to the Next Level," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2012 Labor & Employment Law Seminars, Kalamazoo, MI, April 2012 and Troy, MI, May 2012

"Objection! Demonstrations on When and How to Object," American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment, 5th Annual Labor and Employment Law Conference, Seattle, Washington, November 9, 2011

"Wage and Hour Audit: Employer Best Practices and What to Do if Faced with Such an Audit," HR Spring Training: Miller Canfield's 2011 Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, May 12, 2011

"Labor & Employment Breakout Session," *Crain's* General and In-House Counsel Summit, Novi, MI, May 3, 2011

"The Leaves Have Changed: The Growing Need for Time Off for Military-Related Needs and Family Responsibilities," American Bar Association National Conference on Equal Employment Opportunity Law, San Antonio, TX, March 26, 2010

"Employee Handbooks and Personnel Policies," Miller Canfield Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, October 29, 2009

"The Role of Witness Statements in Corporate Investigations," Miller Canfield Labor and Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, October 23, 2008

"Sex-Based Harassment: Workplace Policies for the Legal Profession," American Bar Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, August 11, 2007

"Shielding your Organization from Liability in Failing to Make Reasonable Accommodations," Council on Education in Management, Dearborn, MI, December 8, 2006

"Harassment in the Workplace," Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Novi, MI, April 27, 2006

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"How to Respond to Complaints of Workplace Harassment," Miller Canfield Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, October 20, 2005

"From Hiring to Firing: Making Sound Legal Decisions," Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Novi, MI, October 13, 2005

"Employee Discipline & Termination," Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Novi, MI, April 28, 2005

"Interviewing and Hiring," Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Novi, MI, March 3, 2005

"Discrimination/Harassment/Retaliation: How to Prevent Religious, Ethnic, Racial, and Other Claims," Miller Canfield Labor & Employment Law Seminar, Troy, MI, October 29, 2003

Publications

"Workplace Violence" (Chapter Co-Author), Employment Law for Michigan Employers, The Institute of Continuing Legal Education, April 2018 Update and 3rd Edition (2017)

"Workplace Harassment Claims" (Chapter Co-Author), Employment Litigation in Michigan, The Institute of Continuing Legal Education, November 2017 Update, 2016 Update, and 3rd Edition (2015)

"Appraising the Performance Appraisal System," American Management Association's AMA Quarterly, Winter 2016-17

"Pre-Hire Employment Practices" (Chapter Author), Michigan Chamber Employment Law Handbook (2016 and 2015 Editions)

"Disability" (Chapter Co-Monitor), Employment Discrimination Law, 5th Edition (2013)

"Hiring" (Chapter Co-Monitor), Employment Discrimination Law, 4th Edition, 2nd Supplement (2009) and 3rd Supplement (2010)

"Discrimination and Harassment" (Chapter Author), Michigan Chamber Employment Law Handbook (2007 and 2005 Editions)

"Miscellaneous Employment Laws" (Chapter Author), Michigan Chamber Employment Law Handbook (2006 Edition)

"Emerging FLSA Trends" (Co-Author), Michigan Bar Journal, January 2005

"2003 Annual Survey of Michigan Law: Professional Responsibility," 50 Wayne Law Review 699 (2004)

"2002 Annual Survey of Michigan Law: Professional Responsibility," 49 Wayne Law Review 575 (2003)

"2001 Annual Survey of Michigan Law: Professional Responsibility," 48 Wayne Law Review 785 (2002)

Articles

U.S. Supreme Court Raises the Bar for Employers in Religious Accommodation Cases

Jennifer L. Sabourin

EEOC Releases Updated 'Know Your Rights' Poster

Michigan Court of Appeals Decision Cautions Need for Review of Arbitration Agreements in Employee Handbooks

EEOC Issues Guidance on Caregiver Discrimination

OSHA Issues Emergency Temporary Standard Requiring Mandatory Vaccination or Testing of Private Sector Workers for COVID-19

6th Circuit Clarifies Opposition Clause of Title VII - Performance of Regular Job Duties as Protected Activity

As Schools Reopen, DOL Issues New Guidance on FFCRA Leave for Employees; Michigan Governor Revises Executive Order Protecting Workers During COVID-19

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act ("WARN Act") Summary

Additional Pay Data Must Be Submitted by September 30, 2019 for EEO-1 Filers

EEOC Rescinds Wellness Regulations

Employers at Higher Risk of Age-Discrimination Litigation with Changing Worker Demographics

OMB Stays EEO-1 Pay Data Reporting Requirements Indefinitely

7th Circuit Becomes First Appellate Court To Extend Title VII Protection To Sexual Orientation

EEOC Updates Guidance on National Origin Discrimination

EEOC Issues New Guidance on Retaliation

EEOC Amends Prior Proposal to Include Pay Data Within EEO-1 Form

EEOC Issues Final Rules on Employer Wellness Programs; Clarifies Position on Incentive Caps, Confidentiality and ADA's "Safe Harbor" Provision

DOL Revises Forms to Comply With EEOC Guidance Regarding GINA

EEOC's Conciliation Efforts Subject to Limited Judicial Review

SCOTUS Pregnancy Discrimination Ruling Could Have Wide Impact On Discrimination Cases

EEOC Issues Updated Enforcement Guidance On Pregnancy Discrimination

Employment + Labor Newsletter