



## 2023 Houston Regional Employer Conference

Wednesday, October 18 | Houston, TX

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

### Registration and Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

### Nothing But the News! A Review of Recent Employment Law Developments

A perennial favorite at the Houston Employer, this is a fast-paced session that provides a unique opportunity to understand the latest court cases, legislative and regulatory activity that will affect your workplace and your responsibilities.

Speakers:

Danielle Herring, Shareholder - Houston

Luke MacDowall, Shareholder - Houston

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

### Wage & Hour for Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond

In this social media inspired presentation about the coming generation's workplace problems, we will look to the future as we explore the expected wage/hour topics that your companies will face in the next decade, and how your early look into this future will allow you to predict and prepare for the wage/hour problems of this new world.

Speakers:

David Jordan, Shareholder - Houston

Allison Williams, Shareholder - Houston

11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

### Break

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

### FMLA and ADA: Exploring Developments in Leaves and Accommodations

This session will highlight recent and ongoing developments in FMLA and ADA, including enforcement by the federal agencies, as well as the case law. We will tackle topics such as remote work, the ever-increasing overlap between FMLA and ADA, the heightened attention on pregnancy under FMLA, ADA, and the new Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, light duty and reassignment, and medical exams of candidates and employees to determine their fitness for duty.

Speaker:

Alexis Knapp, Shareholder - Houston

12:15 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.

## Lunch

12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

## AI & U

In less than a year, AI has gone from carefully controlled access and deployment to widespread availability and use across the workplace. This session will cover the 3 key questions we all have:

1. What exactly is (and isn't) AI?
2. What are the risks (and myths) of AI?
3. What steps should my organization take to practically (but protectively) adopt AI?

Speaker:

Niloy Ray, Shareholder - Minneapolis

1:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

## Break

1:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

## Breakout 5A | Are Restrictive Covenants and Trade Secrets in Jeopardy? Updates and a Practical Plan for the Future

Does the FTC's proposed new rule place restrictive covenants in jeopardy? Is the DTSA the new wave of protecting your client and customer relationships? Get the latest updates on restrictive covenant and trade secret laws across the United States. The session will start with a lively discussion and debate regarding the FTC's proposed ban on non-competition agreements, followed by practical advice concerning the future of restrictive covenants and trade secret protection.

Speakers:

Allan Neighbors, Shareholder - Houston

Timothy Rybacki, Shareholder - Houston

## Breakout 5B | Hottest Trends in Labor Law and Employment Litigation

Don't be caught out of style! This session will cover the hottest topics and trends in labor law and employment litigation. During the labor law portion, we will provide an update on the latest developments from the NLRB and practical guidance for both unionized and non-unionized employers. In the employment litigation update, we will cover the issues that are most likely to result in EEOC scrutiny or employment litigation in the coming year and what employers can do to prevent it.

Speakers:

Nehal Anand, Shareholder - Houston

Lance Bowling, Senior Counsel - Houston

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

## Break

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Breakout 6A | Reductions in Force Master Class

The economic slowdown and fear of recession has caused companies across all industry sectors to restructure their operations and eliminate certain unprofitable lines of business, culminating in significant reductions in force. Is a business restructuring or reduction in force in your organization's future? The Reductions in Force Master Class will provide you with the critical skills and an essential understanding of the recommended practices your organization can employ to effectively right-size while avoiding legal risk. We will also provide you with the forms, checklists, and legal surveys you need to get through this detailed process to help ensure that your restructuring is compliant and implemented correctly.

Speakers:

Kerry Notestine, Shareholder - Houston

Analiza Rodriguez, Associate - Houston

### Breakout 6B | AA and IE&D 2.0 – A Review of Affirmative Action and Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity Programs, Problems, and Possibilities in 2023

The inclusion, equity, and diversity (IE&D) space is continually in flux and there have been significant developments in 2023. In this session, we will address developments and challenges facing the employer community related to affirmative action (AA) and IE&D programs. We will also discuss opportunities for collaboration between stakeholders, including in-house counsel, human resources, people operations, and other IE&D leaders.

Speakers:

Kelcy Palmer, Shareholder - Houston

Jessica Craft, Associate - Houston

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

### Break

3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### Breakout 7A | Strategies for Creating a Speak-Up and Accountability Culture to Reduce Risk and Retain Talent

In recent years, we have seen a profound shift in the employer-employee relationship. Employees are seeking a different value proposition from their employers that includes flexibility, better wages, wellness, work-life integration, opportunities for growth, equity, and inclusion. With this workplace transformation and on the heels of #MeToo and a national racial awakening, employees are sharing their workplace concerns more often and more publicly. Drawing from the insights and experiences of several global companies, this session will cover:

- Trends in employee workplace complaints
- How to effectively triage and respond to internal complaints
- Strategies for avoiding reputational harm
- Building a well-defined escalation process, including when to notify and engage the board
- Approaches to investigator training and cultural competency
- Accountability following an investigation

Speakers:

Kelley Edwards, Office Managing Shareholder - Houston

Nathan Prihoda, Associate - Houston

3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### Breakout 7B | What is Ethics Jeopardy!

Come have fun with a friendly game of Ethics Jeopardy! Participants will be divided into teams and get to refresh their ethics knowledge with a series of multiple-choice questions and explanations, answered in a group setting for a little friendly competition and lots of entertainment.

Speakers:

Mark Jodon, Shareholder - Houston

Urvi Morolia, Associate - Houston

Jay Buller, Associate - Houston

4:30 p.m.

### Volunteer Activity and Cocktail Reception