

Katie Beard

Partner

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KATIE APPROACHES HER WORK WITH A MINDSET OF ACHIEVING CLIENT GOALS AS EFFICIENTLY AND COST EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE. SHE KNOWS HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO BUILD CREATIVE STRATEGIES THAT MINIMIZE THE DISRUPTION TO THE CLIENT'S LIFE OR BUSINESS WHILE STILL WORKING TOWARDS THE CLIENT'S DESIRED OUTCOMES.

Whether the client is facing litigation, responding to an agency investigation, or has come to Katie for advice regarding their general employment policies and procedures, she takes a practical, solution-oriented approach to achieve their goals.

Katie regularly works with business managers, in-house legal departments and human resources managers to ensure compliance with a wide array of federal, state and local employment laws, including Title VII, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) and the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

Katie represents employers in governmental investigations and audits and has experience defending employers against claims of discrimination, harassment and retaliation before the Texas Workforce Commission, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and in both state and federal courts. She represents employers and former employees in disputes regarding trade secrets and noncompete agreements.

Helping employers maintain supportive environments for their workforces that comply with applicable laws, Katie counsels clients on employment policies and procedures, in addition to conducting personalized trainings for management and human resources professionals.

Katie also counsels both employers and employees in negotiating, drafting and enforcing the terms of various employment agreements, including executive compensation, severance, noncompete and nonsolicitation agreements.

Representative Experience

- Represented Dillard's against claims of discrimination based on gender (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act), disability (the Americans with Disabilities Act) and retaliation under ERISA. After a three-day arbitration, the claimant received a take nothing verdict.
- Secured a take nothing defense verdict representing Dillard's in a two-day arbitration against claims of age and disability discrimination under the Texas Labor Code.
- Successfully defended a global logistics company in a federal jury trial involving allegations of FMLA and disability discrimination by a former human resources employee, with the jury issuing a final verdict finding in favor of the company.
- Obtained no-liability findings in several arbitration matters against hospitality and medical companies brought by former employees involving claims of negligence, discrimination or retaliation.
- Represented a client in a state court trial involving allegations of fraud, breach of contract, unjust enrichment, and federal and state debt collection violations, leading to favorable outcome.
- Defended clients on charges of discrimination, harassment and retaliation before the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).
- Defended clients being audited by the Department of Labor (DOL) on wage and hour issues.
- Assisted in securing federal court dismissals of class actions involving wage and hour violations under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- Prepare and review employment policies, handbooks, and anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training programs.
- Counsel clients regarding termination decisions, wage and hour issues, and other personnel matters.

Noteworthy

- Named to the "40 & Under" list in the *Benchmark Litigation Guide*, 2025
- Selected by attorney peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2025
- Named to *D Magazine*'s "Best Lawyers Under 40 in Dallas" List, 2024
- Named to *The Best Lawyers in America*® "Ones to Watch" List, 2022-2024
- Selected by attorney peers for inclusion in *Texas Super Lawyers Rising Stars*®, Thomson Reuters, 2015-2019; 2021-2024

- Named one of the "Best Lawyers in Dallas" by *D Magazine*, 2023

Activities and Memberships

- Family Gateway
 - Board of Directors
- *D CEO's* "Emerging Women Leadership Network" (EWLN) Program
 - Member, 2024-2025
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity
 - Pathfinder, 2019
- State Bar of Texas
 - Member
- American Bar Association
 - Member
- Texas Association of Defense Counsel
 - Member
- Dallas Association of Young Lawyers
 - Member
- Dallas Baylor Lawyer Network
 - Member
- The Patrick E. Higginbotham Inn of Court
 - Associate of the Inn
- Texas Aggie Bar Association
 - Member

Publications

- "Chambers US Regional Employment 2022 Global Practice Guide," *Chambers and Partners*, co-author; 2024.
- "Chambers US Regional Employment 2023 Global Practice Guide," *Chambers and Partners*, co-author; 2023.
- "Workplace Risk Avoidance by Management Training," *Dallas Bar Association Headnotes*; July 2023.
- "Chambers US Regional Employment 2022 Global Practice Guide," *Chambers and Partners*, co-author; 2022.
- "Texas Legislature Considers Shield from COVID-19 Liability Lawsuits for Texas Businesses," *Texas Lawyer*, co-author; May 12, 2021.
- "COVID-19 Liability Protection Legislation for Businesses Designated as an 'Emergency Item' for Passage This Year," Bell Nunnally Client Alert, co-author; March 5, 2021.
- "Small Businesses May Qualify for Exemption from Paid Sick Leave Requirement," Bell Nunnally Client Alert; April 16, 2020.
- "Understanding the CARES Act: Employee Retention Credit," Bell Nunnally Client Alert, author; April 16, 2020.

Presentations

- "What You Need To Know: Employment Law Trends in 2023," Cross Timbers SHRM, co-presenter; April 27, 2023.
- "Imagining a World Without Noncompetes," Association of Corporate Counsel Annual In-House Symposium, co-presenter; April 6, 2023.
- "What You Need To Know: Employment Law Trends in 2023," Mid-Tex Human Resource Management Association, co-presenter; February 16, 2023.
- "Generational Issues in the In-Person and Virtual Workplace," Dallas Bar Association, presenter; May 15, 2020.
- "Employment Law, What's Happening Now," Texas Association of Defense Counsel, presenter; July 15, 2016.

Credentials

Education

- JD, Baylor University School of Law, *magna cum laude*, 2014
- BA, Texas A&M University, *summa cum laude*, 2011

Admissions

- Texas