



EXPERIENCE

Laura Goodson is Board Certified in Labor and Employment Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. She is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Courts for the Western and Southern Districts of Texas. Prior to joining DeShazo & Nesbitt in 2014, Laura was with the Labor Section of the Houston office of Gardere, Wynne, Sewell, now Foley Gardere.

Laura's counseling practice focuses on working with clients to minimize the risk of litigation and reduce liability. She works closely with in-house attorneys, HR departments and operations management, giving advice on day-to-day employment matters.

She also has particular expertise drafting and reviewing non-compete, non-solicitation and non-disclosure agreements and is intimately familiar with trade secret and intellectual property protection issues.

Laura also maintains an active litigation docket. Substantively, these claims commonly involve both single plaintiff and collective FLSA claims, state wage and hour suits, civil right claims, wrongful discharge, breach of executive contract, employment torts, FMLA violations and ERISA complications. Laura has significant experience in wage and hour litigation, including misclassification issues and record keeping. Additionally, a considerable portion of her practice entails both seeking and defending TROs and TIs based on non-compete agreements and misappropriation of trade secrets.

Laura also assisted in running two campaigns against unionization at chemical plants and has successfully tried several cases before the NLRB.

EDUCATION

- J.D., The University of Texas School of Law, with honors (2004)
Recipient, Texas Law Fellowships
- M.A., Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada (2000)
American & British Imperial History
- B.A., Southwestern University (1999)
History
Dean's List
Recipient, Mood Merit Scholarship
President, Zeta Tau Alpha, Lambda Chapter

PROFESSIONAL HONORS

Super Lawyer, *Texas Monthly* magazine 2019
Rising Star, *Texas Monthly* magazine 2013-2017

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- State Bar of Texas
- Austin Bar Association
Labor and Employment Section

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS:

Pro-Active Preventative Counseling and Representation

In-house training of employers on managing unemployment expenses and proper, efficient responses to unemployment claims in multiple states.

- Teaming with employers with a focus on preventative measures to reduce litigation and complaints and limit liability including:
 - Conducting training of managers regarding strategies to avoid litigation or governmental investigations.
 - Drafting of policies and procedures and guidelines to help companies comply with federal and state laws.
 - Assisting employers in the documentation and initiation of terminations and mass layoffs in conjunction with federal and state laws, including the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, OWBPA and WARN.
 - Assisting employers in classification of employees as exempt or non-exempt and providing advice with regard to competitive pay strategies.
 - Conducting sexual harassment and anti-discrimination training for employees and managers.
 - Training HR on handling harassment and discrimination complaints.
 - Timely advising clients regarding new laws and decisions affecting clients' workforce, policies and benefits.
- Consulting with American companies on employment agreements and issues for overseas workers.
- Regularly conducting discrimination and harassment investigations.
- Day-to-day advising regarding ADA accommodations, hiring and firing decisions, risk mitigation in disciplinary actions.
- Investigating complaints and responding to EEOC and DOL inquiries.
- FLSA classification and exemption audits.

Trial and Litigation Experience

- Represented oil and gas services company against harassment and discrimination lawsuit filed by employees in federal court with successful results on summary judgment.
- Represented national electrical systems company in action by former employees for job misclassification and unpaid overtime.
- Represented employers in wage and hour disputes under the Fair Labor Standards Act for improper payment or classification of workers, including several collective actions.

- Represented large insurance underwriter in action by former employee for amounts due under executive employment contract.
- Represented employer in threatened union concerted activity, and conducted pre-election campaign.
- Represented employer in trial before NLRB in unfair labor practices charge resulting in total dismissal.
- Represented partners on several occasions in partnership dissolution litigation involving theft of inventory, breach of fiduciary duties and winding down.
- Represented companies against executives claiming amounts owed pursuant to “change of control” and “good reason” termination provisions in executive agreements.

Unfair Competition Representation

- Prosecuted or defended more than 60 temporary restraining order or temporary injunction proceedings in state and federal court, primarily focusing on unfair competition, trade secret misappropriation, and non-solicitation and non-competition agreements.
- Represented international technology company in defending employee raiding, non-compete, and trade secret dispute resulting in favorable resolution.
- Represented financial services firm after key sales employees joined a competitor and attempted to take key clients to the new firm.
- Represented fire and security company in several cases against employees for misappropriation of confidential information, breach of fiduciary duties and breach of non-solicitation agreements.
- Represented oilfield production chemical company accused of theft and conspiracy.
- Represented employees of new wireline company accused by prior employer of conspiracy, breach of fiduciary duty and violations of non-compete agreement, resulting in outright dismissal of claims against client.
- Represented fracking company against suit brought by competitor alleging newly hired employee in breach of non-solicitation and non-compete agreement resulting in swift resolution and non-suit of claims.

Representation Involving Federal and State Retaliation and Discrimination Laws

- Represented drilling companies in many instances of litigation and charges filed by former employees alleging race, age, sex and national origin discrimination.
- Represented a chemical manufacturer in defending claims regarding disability and age discrimination.
- Represented oil and gas services company in claims of same-sex harassment and sex discrimination.
- Represented national food supplement company in failure to promote race claims.