



## Linda K. Horras

### Of Counsel

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With a strong, wide-ranging litigation practice dating back to 1989, Linda Horras routinely represents public and private employers in federal and state courts and at administrative agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Illinois Department of Human Rights, the Illinois Human Rights Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Illinois and U.S. Departments of Labor. Linda focuses her practice on defending employers facing claims of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and wage and hour violations. A substantial portion of Linda's caseload includes representing employers in discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family & Medical Leave Act, the Illinois Human Rights Act, and the Illinois Whistleblower's Act.

Linda litigates various wage and hour claims at the DOL and in federal court. She aggressively defends her clients in class and collective wage and hour litigation, developing strategies to litigate to defeat class certification and reach an early resolution to end potentially expensive and time-consuming cases. When appropriate, Linda negotiates favorable settlements of complex cases, including sexual harassment cases and collective/class actions. Additionally, Linda represents employers in the grievance and arbitration process involving challenges to discipline, discharge and alleged policy violations.

Linda partners with her clients to guide them on intricate employment matters ranging from internal employee disputes to discipline and discharge and related employee relations issues. She advises employers on proper procedures required under employment laws, routinely drafts employee handbooks and related policies, and often leads training sessions in anti-harassment and internal bias.

Linda spearheads investigations into claims of harassment and discrimination. She assists employers in audits of non-exempt and exempt personnel to ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and adopt policies and procedures that align with changes to laws and job classifications. Linda routinely assists clients with drafting accurate job descriptions to meet the actual position and exemptions in question. She has assisted clients in adopting policies to meet ever-changing leave laws such as the Chicago Sick Leave Act and provided advice in how to audit and then correct errors in applying those laws.

### Practices

Labor & Employment

### Education

J.D., *with distinction*, The John Marshall Law School (now known as the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law), 1989

B.A., *summa cum laude*, Public Administration, Loyola University of Chicago, 1985

### Admissions

Illinois

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

U.S. District Court for the Central and Northern Districts of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Indiana



Most recently, Linda secured important new legal precedent on the right of a school district to terminate a tenured teacher for inappropriate behavior toward students. This led to a written opinion from Illinois' second district appellate court that is likely to be helpful in the public employment sector for responding to internal claims of misconduct.

Spanning nearly three decades, Linda provides employers and employees with anti-harassment training and counsel, and regularly drafts proper discipline, discharge, and policies.

As a former Adjunct Professor at the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law, Linda taught classes on advocacy writing and introductions to computer research.

## Professional Affiliations

- National Association for Women Lawyers, Member
- Chicago Bar Association
  - Labor & Employee Committee, Member

## Representative Matters

- Successfully represented school districts in employment arbitrations and hearings, including representation of school district that lead to expansion and clarification of irremediability standards under the Illinois School Code.
- Successfully negotiated difficult wage/hour case brought by the U.S. Department of Labor that involved significant claims of wage and record-keeping violations and provided required FLSA training to the employer as negotiated with the DOL.
- Successfully negotiated difficult and emotional settlements of harassment claims with favorable terms for clients.
- Obtained denial of wage and hour class certification of case brought under the Illinois Wage Payment & Collection Act & Illinois Minimum Wage Law.
- Obtained arbitration victory over the SEIU on the issue of an employee suspension for a violation of a mandatory flu vaccination policy of hospital client.
- Defeated Rule 23 class certification and FLSA collective action certification in large multi-state off-the-clock claims against an employer. If certified, the class would have been over 5,000 employees and consisted of four separate claims.
- Obtained summary judgment in multiple discrimination cases in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.
- Successfully negotiated resolution of Department of Labor wage audits with administrative agencies, limiting exposure to employers and disruption to payroll operations.
- Successfully handled multiple EEOC, IDHR, IDOL, USDOL and NLRB investigations and obtained favorable outcomes even in situations where negative determinations were expected.
- Successfully handled labor arbitrations, including for public school system and local hospital.
- Successfully sought dismissal of claims that sought to expand statutory and common law such as the invocation of scope of the charge doctrine and preemption.

## Presentations

The following is a partial list that is representative of Linda's recent speaking opportunities:

- Illinois Anti-Harassment Training, multiple clients, 2020 to present
- Anti-harassment Training Programs under Illinois Human Rights Act, 2020 to present
- "The Equal Pay Act and Protecting Workplaces from Claims," ILSHRM Employment Law & Workplace Policy Virtual Conference, Illinois State Council SHRM, April 12, 2023



- Panelist, Employment Attorney Presentation to Law Students, University of Illinois Chicago School of Law, Chicago, Illinois, April 6, 2023
- FLSA overtime and recording keeping training to multi-site client, June 2021
- "Teacher Misconduct Investigations & Dismissal Proceedings," Illinois Council of School Attorneys, May 2021
- "Conducting a Successful Pay Audit," Annual Labor & Employment Seminar, November 2019
- "Essential Elements of an Employee Handbook," Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN) Compliance Workshop, Springfield, Illinois, June 20, 2019
- "Setting the Tone for a Positive & Civil Work Environment for Attorneys," New York City, New York, October 2018
- "Setting the Tone for a Positive and Civil Work Environment," Chicago, Illinois, August 2, 2018
- "Your Role in Providing a Harassment-Free Workplace," New York, New York, May 2018
- "Your Role in Setting a Positive Work Environment," Franklin Park, Illinois, May 2018

## Personal

Linda is a closet author who enjoys writing not only legal briefs, but novels that will (someday) meet a publisher. She is a life-long horse person. Whenever possible, she is on horseback in the forest preserves and is not adverse to fielding calls from clients on her mobile phone while in the saddle.

## Community/Civic Activities

Linda supports organizations that champion women's rights. In 2017, she provided pro bono services to a disabled woman who had been sexually abused in the workplace. As a result of her efforts, the victim secured a sizable monetary settlement that will help fund a trust for this woman's future. She is a member of the National Association of Women Lawyers' subgroup for writing for publication.