



Heather J. Van Meter

Partner

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📡 employmentlawinmotion.com

“With over 25 years of state and federal trial experience, I provide tailored, strategic guidance to each client, addressing their unique needs and delivering practical, customized solutions for every case.”

Heather Van Meter represents and advises private, public, and not-for-profit entities throughout the Pacific Northwest. She counsels employers on a full range of employment- and workplace-related issues, including employment handbook and policy development, compliance with complex state and federal leave laws, wage and hour issues, disability and religious accommodations, employment discrimination, harassment and retaliation claims, and employee discipline and termination. Heather also helps employers draft, negotiate, and enforce employment-related contracts, such as noncompete, nonsolicitation, and nondisclosure agreements, as well as employment and executive employee contracts. She regularly prepares employment-related and contractor agreements and advises on employee situations for regional, national, and international companies. As a former professor and teacher, Heather enjoys providing workplace trainings on a variety of topics to ensure legal compliance while fostering a culture of inclusion. Heather is a trusted advisor to both small and large employers, offering forward-looking guidance to help clients maintain healthy, efficient workplaces.

Heather is recognized by her peers as a leading trial attorney. Her litigation practice specifically includes employment-related litigation, while she also has extensive experience in general civil litigation, including mass torts, drug and medical device and products liability, construction defects, negligence, condemnation, insurance coverage, and multi-district litigation in state and federal courts in Oregon and Washington. Heather’s background includes over eight years in the Oregon Department of Justice’s Civil Litigation Section as a senior assistant attorney general and trial attorney. She has completed over 30 trials to verdict in state and federal courts.

Heather began her legal career working for local, private law firms, then took advantage of an opportunity to teach in Vietnam, teaching commercial law and company law at RMIT-Saigon. Returning from Vietnam, Heather taught constitutional law and evidence at Lewis & Clark Law School. While working as

Education

Ph.D, University of Birmingham, 2017

M.st, University of Oxford, 2011

J.D., Willamette University College of Law, 1998

M.B.A./M.P.A, Willamette University - Atkinson Graduate School of Management, 1998

B.A. University of California, 1994

Bar Admissions

Washington, 1999
Oregon, 1998

Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, District of Oregon

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Washington

U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

a trial attorney, she obtained a master's degree in human rights law at the University of Oxford, and a Ph.D. in international law at the University of Birmingham (England). Heather also taught law, history, and finance classes to middle and high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a professor and teacher, she has gained the ability to explain complex legal matters in understandable ways.

Professional Activities

- Marion County Bar Association, Past President
- Oregon State Bar
 - Nonprofit Organizations Law Section
 - Executive Committee, Secretary, 2024
 - House of Delegates, Past Member
- Oregon Government Ethics Commission, Past Member
- Oregon Women Lawyers, Member
 - Past President
- U.S. District Court of Oregon Historical Society, Past President
- Association of Defense Trial Attorneys, Member
- Association of Workplace Investigators, Member
 - Basic Skills Course Completion, 2024

Civic Activities

- Volunteer criminal prosecuting attorney in Hood River Countyw
- Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Member
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Member

Publications

Heather is a prolific writer on various topics. Following is a listing of publications since 2009. A complete list is available upon request.

- “Federal Agency Issues Memorandum Temporarily Freezing Federal Grant and Loan Payments; Judge Issues Temporary Stay,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Jan. 2025)
- “President Trump Order Seeks to End Discriminatory DEI Programs and Mandates, Affecting Federal Contractors, Private Sector, and Higher Education,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Jan. 2025)
- “President Trump’s First-Day Orders Impacting Employers,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Jan. 2025)
- “Chapter 21: Leave Laws,” Oregon State Bar, BarBooks™, *Labor and Employment Law in Oregon: Public Sector* (Oct. 2024)
- “From Fingerprints to Facial Recognition: Employer Responsibilities for Biometric Data Management,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Aug. 2024)
- “Ninth Circuit Holds the Trustee Has Standing, Not the Employee, to Title VII Claims Rooted in the Pre-Bankruptcy Past,” Miller Nash, *Bank Law Monitor* (Jul. 2024)
- “April and May Showered Employers with Legal Developments Locally and Nationwide,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (May 2024)
- “U.S. Supreme Court Makes Discrimination Claims Easier to Prove by Recognizing Job Transfer Can Be Adverse Action,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (May 2024)
- “OSHA Amends Rule on Employee Representation During Safety Inspections,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Apr. 2024)
- “Learn the Ins and Outs of Mergers, and Other Alternatives,” *Campus Legal Advisor* (May 2024)

- “Winding Down and Bankruptcy Options for Nonprofit Entities,” Nonprofit Association of Oregon, coauthor (Mar. 2024)
- “Oregon Eliminates (Most of) OFLA in Favor of PLO, But OFLA Still Applies (Sometimes),” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Mar. 2024)
- “Employer Issues in Bankruptcy,” Miller Nash, *Bank Law Monitor* (Feb. 2024)
- “California Employees Must Receive Notice of Noncompete Invalidation by February 14,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Feb. 2024)
- “No More Music in the Workplace: Analyzing *Sharp v. S&S Activewear*,” International Risk Management Institute, *Employment Practices Liability Consultant* (Fall 2023)
- “Revising The DIKW Pyramid And The Real Relationship Between Data, Information, Knowledge and Wisdom,” *Law, Technology and Humans Journal* (Nov. 2020)
- Various articles on county bar events – Marion County Bar Bulletin, Summer 2017 to present
- “Judge Anna J. Brown Takes Senior Status,” *Oregon Benchmarks* and *Oregon Women Lawyers Newsletter* (Summer 2017)
- “Judge Brown to be Honored with American Inns of Court’s Esteemed Professionalism Award,” *Oregon Benchmarks* and *Oregon Women Lawyers Newsletter* (Summer 2017)
- “‘Self-Defined Success,’ in Her Story: Lessons in Success from Lawyers Who Live It,” *American Bar Association Litigation Section* (2017)
- “The Difference a Decade Makes: Lifting Oregon’s Ban on Same-Sex Marriage,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Winter 2015)
- “Jerry Harris, Court Reporter Extraordinaire,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Winter 2015)
- “Profile: Noreen Kelly Saltveit McGraw,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Summer 2014)
- “The Human Right to Water: Proposal For A Human Rights-Based Prioritization Approach,” Willamette University College of Law Human Right to Water Symposium (Spring 2011)
- “Improving State Party Reporting on Use of Available Resources for ICESCR,” University of Oxford (Apr. 2011)
- “Co-Presidents’ Messages,” Oregon Women Lawyers, *Advance Sheet* (2009-10)
- “Kulongoski Increases Diversity on Courts,” Oregon Women Lawyers, *Advance Sheet* (Winter 2010)
- “Candidates for Judicial Openings in the District Court of Oregon,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Fall 2009)

Presentations

Heather is a frequent speaker on various topics. Following is a listing of presentations since 2009. A complete list is available upon request.

- “Employment Agreements for Nonprofit Executives,” Oregon State Bar, Nonprofit Organizations Law Section, Advising Oregon Nonprofits in 2024—Privacy, AI, Ethics, and More (Dec. 2024)
- “Protected Employee Speech and Religious Expression in the Workplace,” Oregon BOLI, Annual Employment Law Conference (Nov. 2024)
- “Nonprofit Law: Common Legal Issues,” Nonprofit Association of Oregon (Oct. 2024)
- “Tornado Warning: Identifying and Addressing Workplace Bullying, Violence & Safety,” Miller Nash, Employment Law Seminar (Nov. 2024)
- “Relationship Status? It’s Complicated. Defining Employees, Independent Contractors, and Others,” Northwest Human Resource Management Association (NHRMA), Annual Conference (Sept. 2024)
- “Pay Equity and Transparency: Oregon Update,” Oregon 7 (Sept. 2024)
- “Don’t ‘Leave’ Me Behind: A Guide to Oregon’s Evolving Leave Laws and ADA Landscape,” Oregon 7 (Sept. 2024)
- “Employment Mock Trial,” Southwest Washington SHRM, 2024 Annual Conference (Sept. 2024)
- “Agricultural Employment Law Updates,” Oregon State Bar, Agricultural Law Section, Annual Round-Up CLE (Aug. 2024)

- “Embracing Change: A Guide to Oregon’s Evolving Leave Laws Landscape,” Miller Nash, Employment Law in Motion webinar (May 2024)
- “Cultivating Inclusion at OWLS Events,” Oregon Women Lawyers, OWLS Spring CLE (Apr. 2024)
- “2024 Legal Updates for HR,” Seattle SHRM, March Chapter Meeting (Mar. 2024)
- “Nonprofit Organizations,” Lewis & Clark Law School, Small Business Legal Clinic (Mar. 2024)
- “Three Primary Kinds of Employment/Quasi-Employment Relationships: Employees, Independent Contractors, and Volunteers,” Oregon State Bar, Nonprofit Organizations Law Section CLE (Dec. 2023)
- “Employee Speech and Religious Expression in Today’s Workplace,” King County Bar Association, In-House Counsel Section (Nov. 2023)
- “Litigation Traps for Non-Litigators,” Multnomah Bar Association, Young Lawyers Section (Nov. 2023)
- “No Whammies: Don’t Press Your Luck on Wage and Hour Issues,” Miller Nash, Employment Law Seminar (Oct. 2023)
- “Mental Health: An Interactive Panel Discussion,” Oregon SHRM (Oct. 2023)
- “West Coast Panel Discussion,” Nonprofit Insurance Alliance (NIA)/Alliance of Nonprofits for Insurance (ANI), EPLI Symposium (Sept. 2023)
- “Workplace Re-Opening and COVID-19,” Oregon State Bar (Apr. 2021)
- “COVID and Employers: OSHA Guidance for Maintaining ‘Safe Workplaces,’” Oregon State Bar (Apr. 2021)
- “Law Technology & Humans Conference,” Queensland University of Technology (Dec. 2019)
- “Elder Abuse CLE,” Willamette Valley Estate Planning Professionals (Nov. 2018)
- “Ethics and Elder Abuse CLE,” Marion County Bar Association (Nov. 2018)
- “Ethics CLE,” Oregon Department of Justice (Nov. 2018)
- “ABA Public Practice Panel,” Willamette College of Law (Oct. 2018)
- “Let Me Call You Sweetheart: Implicit Bias in Practice of Law,” Willamette Valley Inns of Court (Mar. 2018)
- “Salary Negotiation,” Willamette University, National Association of Women MBAs (Nov. 2017)
- “Hard to Get CLE Credits,” Marion County Bar Association (Nov. 2017)
- “Using State Consumer Protection Statutes to Address Corporate Greenwashing,” Santa Clara University (Sept. 2017)
- Regular speaker at Roberts High School Street Law Program, 2014 – 2018
- “Liquor and Ethics,” Marion County Bar Association (Apr. 2017)
- “Enforcing Human Rights Through the Private Sector,” University of Washington, Business and Human Rights Workshop (Sept. 2016)
- “Stories from the Conference Room,” Willamette Valley Inns of Court (Nov. 2015)
- “Government Litigation in the Age of E-Discovery,” Oregon Department of Justice (Oct. 2015)
- “ABA Public Practice Panel,” Willamette Law School (Sept. 2015)
- “Trial Preparation,” Willamette Moot Court Board (Sept. 2015)
- “Environmental Struggles, Justice Struggles,” Harvard Law School, Institute for Global Law and Policy Conference (June 2015)
- “Employment Law Training for ODOT Managers,” (Oct. 2014)
- “Pro Bono Litigation,” Oregon Chapter of the Federal Bar Association (Oct. 2014)
- “Road to the Bench,” Oregon Women Lawyers (2006-present)
- “Evidence Privileges,” Willamette College of Law (June 2013)
- “Governmental Immunities,” Oregon DOJ, Presentation to DAS-Risk (June 2013)
- “Attorney Fee Petitions,” Oregon DOJ (May 2013)
- “Complaint & Answer CLE,” Oregon DOJ (Apr. 2013)
- “Oregon Trial Practice: Emerging Trends and Multi-Jurisdictional Disputes,” Oregon State Bar (Oct. 2012)

- “Student Free Speech: Tinker to Present Day,” Lewis & Clark Law School, Federalist Society Debate (Mar. 2012)
- “Health Care Reform Constitutionality,” Lewis & Clark Law School, Federalist Society Debate (Nov. 2011)
- “State Reporting under ICESCR,” University of Oxford, Master’s in International Human Rights Law (Aug. 2011)
- “Current Topics in Mass Torts Litigation,” Oregon State Bar (Apr. 2010)
- “Breaking Barriers: How Far We Have Come, How Far We Have To Go,” Oregon Women Lawyers (2009)
- “Diversifying the Judiciary: Perspectives on Sonia Sotomayor, U.S. Supreme Court Nominee,” Mary Leonard Law Society (Aug. 2009)

Recognition & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (Portland, OR)
 - Arbitration Law, 2024-present
 - Employment Law—Management, 2024-present
- Selected for inclusion as an Oregon Super Lawyer—Rising Star, 2008-2010

Personal Activities

Heather is a Pacific Northwest native and enjoys spending time with her children and large family, hiking in the great outdoors, and doing personal training as a NASM-certified trainer. Heather also recently wrote and published a children’s book.