



Contact

Joseph C. O'Keefe

Partner

New York

+1.212.969.3019

jokeefe@proskauer.com

Joseph C. O'Keefe is a partner in the Labor & Employment Law Department.

For more than 25 years, Joe has litigated employment disputes of all types, on behalf of employers, before federal and state courts, arbitral tribunals (e.g. FINRA and AAA), and state and federal administrative agencies. Joe has litigated employment-related lawsuits alleging discrimination and sexual harassment, whistleblowing, non-competition/trade secret matters, compensation disputes, breach of contract, defamation, fraud and other business related torts. Joe's practice includes representing clients nationwide in complex class and collective litigation, including state and federal wage and hour and discrimination claims. He has tried numerous cases before arbitrators, judges and juries. Joe's experience includes appellate work in both federal and state courts.

In addition to his extensive litigation practice, Joe regularly advises employers on a wide range of employment related issues. He counsels clients concerning management of personnel problems, reductions in force, investigation of employee complaints, state and federal leave laws, wage and hour issues, pay equity, employment policies and contracts. Joe also conducts internal investigations, on behalf of employers, into allegations of discrimination and harassment.

While Joe's practice focuses on the financial services industry, he represents employers in a variety of industries including pharmaceuticals, health care,

technology, communications, fashion, consumer products, higher education, publishing and media. He frequently writes articles concerning developments in the law and speaks at seminars concerning legal developments in the labor and employment law field.

Matters

Representative matters:

- Defense award in FINRA proceeding representing financial services firm and individual financial services representatives in raiding and business tort matter brought by regional competitor
- Defense verdict in an eight-week New Jersey Superior Court jury trial concerning alleged discrimination on the basis of age, disability and religion
- Multiple defense awards in arbitrations for a global financial services firm in matters alleging defamation, breach of contract, and discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, and disability
- Resolution of FLSA and state wage and hour law class action against a large hospitality industry client
- Representation of trustees of union welfare fund in connection with claims of gender discrimination and harassment
- Representation of global financial services firms in multiple matters concerning claims asserted by registered representatives before FINRA
- Representation of a prestigious university in claims brought by a former professor alleging defamation and breach of contract
- Representation of a publisher in a matter alleging age and gender discrimination
- Summary judgment in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts in a matter alleging gender discrimination against a property and casualty insurer
- Prevailing on a motion to dismiss in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in a matter alleging federal, state and city law claims of

race discrimination and retaliation against a health care services provider

Practices

Employment Litigation & Arbitration, Non-Compete & Trade Secrets, Hiring & Terminations, Class Actions, Wage and Hour, Whistleblowing & Retaliation, Employment Counseling & Training

Industries

Financial Institutions

Education

George Washington University National Law Center, J.D., 1991

With Honors

Member, *George Washington Journal of International Law*

College of the Holy Cross, B.A., 1988

Admissions & Qualifications

New York

New Jersey

Court Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit

U.S. District Court, New Jersey

U.S. District Court, New York, Eastern District

U.S. District Court, New York, Southern District

U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit

U.S. District Court, Michigan, Eastern District

Memberships

New Jersey State Bar Association

Essex County Bar Association

American Bar Association

[Awards & Recognition](#)

New Jersey Super Lawyers 2015-2017

New York Legal Aid Society Pro Bono Publico Award 2007

New York Legal Aid Society Pro Bono Award 2006

Benchmark Labor & Employment Stars 2019

The Legal 500 United States: Labor & Employment: Disputes (including Collective Actions): Defense 2019