



Courtney L. Nichols

PARTNER

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Practice Areas

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Crisis Response Team

Employment Litigation

Human Resources Services

Labor & Employment Law

Labor Law

Religious Institutions Liability

Title IX Law

Education

- Chicago-Kent College of Law, *Cum Laude*, J.D., 2011
 - Moot Court Honor Society
 - CALI Award, Product Liability
 - Merit Scholarship
- Michigan State University, James Madison College, B.A., 2008

Admissions

Michigan, 2011

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, 2011

U.S. District Court, Western

Courtney L. Nichols serves as the leader of Plunkett Cooney's Litigation Department, and she is a member of the firm's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group. Ms. Nichols also has the distinction of serving as a member of the Board of Directors of ALFA International, a global law firm consortium for which Plunkett Cooney is the designated law firm in Michigan.

Ms. Nichols focuses her litigation practice in the area of employment law, including discrimination, retaliation, and civil rights claims brought under state and federal statutes. She also provides counsel to employers of all sizes regarding complicated employment and labor issues prior to litigation, including compliance with the ADA, FMLA, and FLSA. Ms. Nichols frequently represents clients in drafting and enforcing contractual agreements, including covenants not to compete and severance agreements involving executives.

In addition, Ms. Nichols advises religious institutions on various aspects of employment law, and she works with institutions of higher education to address employment issues and to resolve Title IX claims on campus, which includes training and providing counsel and advice to administrators and staff on investigating and adjudicating such claims.

Representative Client Work

- Successfully defended client in contested breach of contract action, including through trial where a favorable verdict was reached
- Successfully obtained a no cause verdict on negligence matter on behalf of major regional retailer

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District of Michigan, 2011

- Drafts and updates employee manuals, including policies, to address complex issues such as employee leaves, wage and hour compliance and employee classifications
- Represents employers in class action litigation involving the Fair Labor Standards Act
- Counsels clients through union-related issues including, grievances, negotiations and arbitration
- Advises clients on an array of employment issues, including hiring, firing, employee investigations and discipline
- Defends charges filed against employers with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights
- Obtained favorable rulings and/or dismissals in several premises liability matters on behalf of national retail clients
- Successfully drafted and argued several motions for summary disposition in state court and summary judgment in federal court involving claims asserting violations of federal and state employment statutes, including Title VII, ELCRA, ADA, FMLA and Michigan's Whistleblowers' Protection Act

Publications and Lectures

- "Workplace Integrity: Preventing Harassment and Discrimination Before it Starts," Presenter, Michigan Chamber of Commerce 2025 MiBiz360 Series, Nov. 13, 2025
- "Kindred Spirits - Tricks & Treats for Public and Private Employers," Panelist, Plunkett Cooney's Labor, Employment & Government Law Practice Group Seminar, Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, East Lansing, MI, Nov. 5, 2025
- "Harassment U" - We Major in Violating Employment Law Best Practices, Moderator, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Seminar, Detroit Marriott Troy, Nov. 17, 2023
- ALFA International's 2023 Labor & Employment Seminar, Program Chair, Fairmont Banff Springs, Banff, Alberta, June 21-23, 2023
- "The Employment Law Lab - Analyzing Employee Leaves and Accommodations," Moderator and Presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Seminar, MSU

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Management Education Center, June 14, 2023

- What is the 'Union Boom' and Will it Affect My Business?, Author, dbusiness.com, May 8, 2023
- "SCARE-tober: Urban Legends or Realities of the Workplace?," Moderator, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Seminar, Detroit Marriott Troy, Oct. 27, 2022
- "Delta Variant Update - New Federal COVID-19 Vaccination, Testing & Mask Rules for Employers," Co-presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Webinar, Sept. 16, 2021
- "Getting Vacc to Work - A Guide to Returning to In-Person Work Amid Easing Pandemic Restrictions," Co-presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Webinar, May 20, 2021
- "New Challenges in the New Year - A Virtual Seminar for Employers & HR Professionals," Co-presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Webinar, Feb. 25, 2021
- "Ensuring Compliance and Production During COVID-19 Pandemic, Presenter, Michigan Chamber of Commerce webinar, Aug. 13, 2020
- "Back to Work - Best Practices for Resuming Operations Under Michigan and Federal Law," Co-presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Webinar, May 12, 2020
- "Employment Law Update Regarding the FFCRA and the CARES Act," Presenter, ALFA International webinar, Presenter, April 30, 2020
- "Coronavirus Response Q&A - Employment Law Panel Discussion," Co-presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Webinar, March 17, 2020
- "Be my Valentine (or Else!) - Dealing with Dark Tales from the Workplace," Moderator, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Seminar, Troy Marriott Hotel, Feb. 7, 2020
- "Much Faster Than Molasses: Preparing For Emerging Technologies," Presenter, ALFA International 2019 Labor & Employment Seminar, The Montage Palmetto Bluff, Bluffton, South Carolina, June 14, 2019
- "Mitigating Mistakes - Repairing and Recovering From Common HR Miscues," Co-presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group Webinar, May 9, 2019
- "The Year in Review: Critical Decisions from Local, State, and Federal Courts and the U.S. Supreme Court Impacting Public Employers," Presenter, Michigan Public Employers Labor Relations Association's Annual Conference, Shanty Creek Resort, Sept. 13, 2018
- "Terminate an Employee" ICLE On-Demand Webcast, Co-presenter, August 1, 2018
- "Best Practices for Employee Mobile Data Management (and Why Most Bring Your Own Device Policies Fail)," Presenter, Ohio State Bar Association's Advanced Employment Law Seminar, May 24, 2018

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- "Provocative Social Issues: Gender Identity, Activism and Hate Speech," Co-presenter, Michigan Independent Colleges & Universities Workshop, U Club, Lansing, MI, May 1, 2018
- "Hot legal issues and Title IX," MAISL Trust & Fund Meeting, Co-presenter, Inn at St. Johns & Conference Center, Plymouth, MI, May 10, 2018
- "A Day in the Life: Solving Real HR Problems" seminar, Presenter, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Lansing, Jan. 17, 2018
- "Leaders and Innovators" series hosted by WWJ News Radio 950 AM, Panelist: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, Southfield, Nov. 16, 2017
- "Things That go Bump in the Workplace - A Survivor's Guide to Employment Nightmares," Moderator, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group seminar, Oct. 27, 2017
- "Harassment in the Workplace Will You Know if You See It?," Presenter, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Grand Rapids, Aug. 9, 2017
- ALFA International's Labor & Employment Practice Group, Presenter, Ritz-Carlton Lake Tahoe, Truckee, California, July 26, 2017
- "HR for Small Businesses: 2016 Employment Law Update," Presenter, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Sept. 7, 2016
- "FLSA Status Check: Regulation Revisions, Notable Court Rulings & Other Hot Topics," Presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Sophisticate Employer Webinar Series, June 8, 2017
- "Social Media & HR: How to Utilize it Effectively & Avoid Risk," Presenter, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, June 16, 2016
- 2016 ALFA International - Eastern Great Lakes Regional Seminar, Program Chair, Westin Book Cadillac, Detroit, April 14 – 15, 2016
- "Pregnancy Discrimination and the Intersection of the ADA/FMLA," Presenter, ACI EPLI presentation, New York City, January 2016
- "Clueless - The Cost & Consequence of Untrained Management, Presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group seminar, May 2015
- Making Your Case: Mastering the Ever-Changing Role of Technology in Your Practice
- "Sexual Harassment, Lies and Social Media, Presenter, Plunkett Cooney's Labor & Employment Law Practice Group mock trial and client seminar, November 2011

Professional Affiliations

- State Bar of Michigan
- ALFA International (Labor & Employment Law Practice Group, Vice Chair; 2023 Labor & Employment Seminar, Program Chair)

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Honors & Recognitions

- Best Lawyers in America® for Employment Law – Management and Labor and Employment Litigation, 2026
- Influential Women of Law Honoree, Michigan Lawyers Weekly, 2025
- 30 in Their Thirties Business Leaders Honoree, DBusiness Magazine, 2024
- Notable Leaders in Employment & Labor Law, Crain's Detroit Business, 2023
- Go To Employment Lawyer honoree, Michigan Lawyers Weekly, 2021
- Michigan Super Lawyer Rising Star in Employment & Labor, Michigan Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters publication, 2016 - 2021
- "Up & Coming Lawyer" Award, Michigan Lawyers Weekly, 2015