



→ Denise E. Giraudo

Partner

2099 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Suite 100
Washington, DC 20006-6801

T: +1.202.747.1906

F: +1.202.747.3933

dgiraudo@sheppardmullin.com

Denise Giraudo is a partner and Practice Group Leader of the firm's Labor and Employment Practice Group. Prior to this role, Denise served as the Office Managing Partner of the firm's Washington, D.C. office and Co-Chair of the firm's Women Lawyers Group.

Areas of Practice

Denise counsels and represents management in a wide range of labor and employment litigation matters. She regularly and successfully represents employers before state and federal courts as well as various local and federal administrative agencies. Her extensive litigation practice includes representing employers in connection with discrimination and retaliation claims under all applicable local, state and federal statutes, disability accommodation claims, wage and hour claims, whistleblowing claims under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and the False Claims Act, unfair labor practice charges and grievance arbitrations. Denise's litigation practice includes single-plaintiff cases as well as class and collective actions.

In addition to her litigation experience, Denise regularly counsels clients regarding the preparation and application of personnel policies and provides advice to clients regarding reductions-in-force, discipline, terminations and employee accommodations and leaves of absences. She has routinely handled internal investigations and counseled employers regarding the strategic response to allegations of discrimination.

Denise's practice also includes the representation of employers on matters of workplace safety and health. As part of her workplace safety practice, Denise provides guidance on federal and state OSHA compliance, challenging citations and litigating OSHA related matters before federal and state agencies and courts.

Honors

Top Read Article Award for "Executive Order 14042: Survival Guide for Federal Contractors (An Analysis of What We Know, What We Think, and What We Don't Know About President Biden's COVID-19 Executive Order for Federal Contractor," 2022

Best Lawyers in America: Litigation – Labor and Employment, *Best Lawyers*, 2026

Recommended Lawyer - Labor and Employment, *Legal 500*, 2019, 2025

Washington, D.C. Super Lawyers, *Super Lawyers*, 2018-2024

Rising Star, Washington, D.C. Super Lawyers, *Super Lawyers*, 2014 - 2017

Experience

Representative Matters

Denise represents clients in industries and occupations such as defense contracting, retail and healthcare. Her recent work on behalf of clients and published decisions includes the following:

- *Chonte Long v. Motion Picture Association of America* (D.D.C. Sept. 16, 2024): Won a complete defense verdict following a five-day jury trial in a case where plaintiff alleged employment discrimination and retaliation under Title VII and the District of Columbia Human Rights Act.
- Successfully defended against Motion for Temporary Restraining Order in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida filed against large nationwide healthcare provider attacking their DEI program.
- *Select Interior Concepts Inc et al. v. Pental* (N.D. Tex. August 6, 2024): Obtained summary judgment for Architectural Surfaces Group against claims of breach of contract and retaliation in violation of the Sarbanes Oxley Act.
- Secured Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia on behalf of investment firm against former employees based on breach of fiduciary duties and misappropriation of trade secrets.
- Arbitration award for client, a national retailer, following four-day arbitration hearing in Baltimore, Maryland, where former management employee alleged termination was a result of national origin discrimination.
- Full defense verdict in an ADA discrimination/failure to accommodate case after a five-day jury trial in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland for one of world's largest aeronautics company.
- *Brandon Williamson v. Bon Secours Richmond Health System, Inc.*, 34 F.Supp.3d 607, (E.D.Va. July 28, 2014): Decision granting motion for summary judgment on all of plaintiff's claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- Obtained decision in favor of leading sprinkler and alarm company before Department of Labor Administrative Law Judge, where former employee had alleged that his termination violated the anti-retaliation provisions of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.
- Obtained decision in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granting motion to dismiss in favor of international security company dismissing case with prejudice where plaintiff brought claims for wrongful termination and discrimination in violation of the District of Columbia Human Rights Act.
- Obtained decision dismissing plaintiff's complaint in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia against staffing agency where plaintiff alleged violation of Title VII and the District of Columbia Human Rights Act.
- Obtained decision in favor of international security company in labor arbitration where former employee alleged termination was without just cause.

Articles

- Employer Tips As EEOC Urges Return To Low Retaliation Bar
Law360, 02.09.2023

- OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard Survival Guide
12.22.2021
- Executive Order 14042: Survival Guide for Federal Contractors
10.06.2021
- Legal Corner: What You Need to Know About the President's September 22 "Divisive Ideology" Executive Order
The Coalition for Government Procurement, 11.06.2020

Labor & Employment Law Blog Posts

- "Analyzing President Trump's Latest Executive Order Titled 'Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity,'" January 28, 2025
- "What Employers Need to Know in a Post-Dobbs Landscape," August 3, 2022
- "Ban the Box: Federal Government Adopts Fair Hiring Practice," January 25, 2022
- "OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard Survival Guide," December 22, 2021
- "Challenged – OSHA's Rule Mandating COVID Vaccinations or Weekly Testing for Employers Halted," November 22, 2021
- "It's Here: OSHA's Rule Mandating COVID Vaccinations or Weekly Testing for Employers," November 4, 2021
- "The CARES Act: What Employers Need to Know About Its Impact on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act," March 30, 2020
- "What Employers Need to Know About the Newly-Enacted Families First Coronavirus Act," March 19, 2020
- "What Employers Need to Know About H.R. 6201: The Families First Coronavirus Response Act," March 16, 2020
- "A Halt to Minimum Wage for Tipped Workers," October 5, 2018
- "Minimum Wage Inches Closer to Reality for Tipped Workers in the District of Columbia," June 27, 2018
- "Department of Labor Offers Employers Clarity By Resuming Its Practice of Issuing Opinion Letters," April 25, 2018
- "D.C. Voters Will Decide Whether to Eliminate Tipped Restaurant Wages," March 21, 2018

Healthcare Law Blog

- "Reopening Challenges: FAQs On Preparing For Additional Waves Of COVID-19," July 23, 2020
- "COVID-19 Employment Guidelines and FAQ", March 18, 2020

Global Trade Law Blog

- "Refresher: How to Comply With U.S. Export Controls and Anti-Discrimination Laws When Recruiting and Hiring Foreign Nationals," April 8, 2020

Government Contracts & Investigations Blog

- "Supreme Court Enjoins OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard; Keeps CMS Rule Alive," January 18, 2022
- "Executive Order 14042 Survival Guide," October 11, 2021

Media Mentions

Wealth advisor Salomon & Ludwin resumes lawsuit against former employees after claiming appeals court win
Richmond BizSense, 09.29.2025

Appeals Court Upholds Ban on Advisors at Dynasty-Backed RIA From Contacting Ex-Clients
WealthManagement.com, 08.14.2025

Attorneys Feeling Impact Of Policy, Leadership Shifts At EEOC
Law360, 02.12.2025

Sheppard Mullin Wins Injunction for Financial Services Firm in Dispute Over 'Raiding Exemption' Under Broker Recruiting Protocols
ALM, 07.25.2024

Mass Shootings—Many in the Workplace—Are on the Rise
SHRM, 06.05.2023

EEOC's 2022 Amicus Briefs Focused On Retaliation Standards
Law360, 12.12.2022

Why HR leaders should document everything before firing someone
HR Brew, 08.23.2022

The tension rises at Ford
Dealers wonder: Where's the company headed?
Automotive News.com, 10.15.2018

When Should Employers Tell Employees That Layoffs Are Looming?
Society for Human Resource Management, 04.19.2018

Sheppard Mullin adds Ex-Ogletree Deakins Employment Atty
Law360, 03.12.2018

Events

DC Women Lawyers Group Panel and Reception
11.19.2025

Changing Priorities in Federal Research Grants and Contracts
Healthcare Insights: Navigating Change Under the New Administration
Webinar Series, 06.04.2025

ACC NCR: First 100 Days of the New Administration Conference
Session Four: Managing Risk in the Everchanging World of the Trump Administration's Executive Orders
Webinar, 05.07.2025

Part 3: Understanding the Impact of the DEI Executive Orders for Federal Contractors
04.22.2025

Association of Corporate Counsel NCR Non-Compete Updates
09.21.2022

WHLC Dobbs Series Part 3
Issues Employers Must Face – the Far-Reaching Effects of Dobbs
Webinar, 08.09.2022

Health Equity and ACA Section 1557: The Future of Nondiscrimination in Healthcare
Webinar, 02.10.2022

Employment Changes in the World of COVID-19
Clear Law Institute Webinar
07.01.2020

Getting Back to Business Webinar Series (Part 1)
Planning and Best Practices for Employers in a Changed Workplace
Webinar, 05.21.2020

Preparing for a Post-COVID World - What Retailers Need to Get in Place Now
Webinar, 04.23.2020

Part Two of the Federal Contractor's COVID-19 Survival Guide
04.02.2020

Memberships

Member, Labor and Employment Section, American Bar Association

Podcasts & Webinars

WHLC Dobbs Series, Part 3: Issues Employers Must Face – the Far-Reaching Effects of Dobbs.
08.09.2022

Getting Back to Business Webinar Series: Session One
05.21.2020

Preparing for a Post-COVID World: What Retailers Need to Get in Place Now
04.23.2020

Nota Bene Episode 77: Labor, Employment, and Immigration in a Pandemic World with Kelly Hensley, Denise Giraudo, and Greg Berk
04.15.2020

Practices

Labor and Employment

Labor and Employment Counseling

Labor and Employment Litigation
Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation
Employee Hiring/Discipline/Termination
Employment Agreements
Handbooks and Personnel Policies
Harassment Investigation and Training
Health and Safety Regulations/OSHA
Immigration Investigations and Compliance
Labor Union Management Relations
Wage and Hour Class Actions
Wage and Hour Regulations
Workplace Violence
Wrongful Termination

Industries

Aerospace, Defense & Government Services
Entertainment, Technology and Advertising
Healthcare
Hospitality
Retail, Fashion & Beauty

Education

J.D., Catholic University, Columbus School of Law, 2007
B.A., Georgetown University, 2004

Clerkships

Law Clerk to the Honorable Robert R. Rigsby of the Superior Court for the District of Columbia

Admissions

California
District of Columbia
U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

Additional Office

San Francisco