



→ Kristi L. Thomas

Partner

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Kristi L. Thomas is a partner in the Labor and Employment Practice Group in the firm's Orange County office. She serves on the firm's Recruiting Committee, Sustainability Committee and is a member of the Wellness Resources Group. She is also actively involved in pro bono work at the firm.

Areas of Practice

Kristi's practice involves representing employers in the defense of complaints for class action and single-plaintiff matters. Kristi has handled all aspects of civil litigation defense, including taking and defending depositions, law and motion practice, mediation, arbitration, and second-chairing multiple trials to defense verdict.

Kristi also provides day-to-day counseling on a wide variety of labor and employment law issues, including wage-and-hour issues, disability and family/medical leave issues, discipline, and termination. She conducts supervisor and non-supervisor trainings on behalf of clients regarding sexual harassment and workplace behavior.

Kristi began her legal career in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 2008, where she defended nationally-ranked hospitals and professionals. Kristi became a member of the State Bar of California in 2011, and thereafter gained significant experience in complex litigation before joining the Sheppard Mullin team.

Articles

- August 2022 Ethically Speaking - Avoiding Pitfalls When Making a Referral to Another Lawyer
Orange County Bar Association, 08.02.2022
- DFEH Issues Guidance to Employers Regarding Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policies
San Mateo County Bar Association Here-Say Newsletter, 05/06.2021

Healthcare Law Blog Posts

- "California's Minimum Wage Increase for Health Care Workers is on the Horizon," May 29, 2024

Labor and Employment Law Blog

- "Delay In California's Minimum Wage Increase for Health Care Workers," August 12, 2024
- "Employers Under Fire: How to Address Employee Pay and Related Issues When Faced with Natural Disasters," September 5, 2023

- "California Court of Appeal Clarifies Employer's Obligation to Reimburse Expenses Depends on Whether They Were a Direct Consequence of Job Duties, Not Proximately Caused by Employer," July 17, 2023
- "Are You Sitting Down for This? California Court of Appeal Provides Further Guidance on Suitable Seating Claims," July 27, 2022
- "Cal/OSHA Adopts Fourth Iteration of COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards," April 25, 2022
- "Further Updates to Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards Likely Coming Soon," April 11, 2022
- "COVID-19 ETS Requiring Vaccination or Weekly Testing Withdrawn," January 28, 2022
- "California Supreme Court Announces New Standard That Meal and Rest Period Premiums Must Be Paid at Same "Regular Rate of Pay" Used to Calculate Overtime Payments," July 16, 2021
- "DFEH Issues Guidance to Employers Regarding Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policies," March 11, 2021
- "Employment, Tax, and Visa Issues Associated With the Overseas Telecommuter," September 30, 2020
- "Mother of All Presumptions 2.0: Expanding Workers Compensation Benefits to Employees That Test Positive for COVID-19," September 23, 2020
- "Mother of Presumptions: Employees With COVID-19 Presumed to Have Contracted Virus From Exposure at Work," May 8, 2020
- "Workers' Compensation Claims During the Pandemic and Mitigating the Risk," April 28, 2020
- "California Mandates COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave for Food Sector Workers," April 17, 2020
- "Ninth Circuit Holds That Statutes Do Not Constitute "Rules or Regulations of the SEC" for Purposes of Sarbanes-Oxley Act Whistleblower Claims," March 4, 2019
- "New California Law Puts an End to Secret Sexual Harassment Settlements," October 1, 2018

Retail Trend Spotter Blog

- "New Bills Being Served Up That May Soon Impact Food Retailers and Manufacturers," February 20, 2024

Media Mentions

From TAP to Big Law: Alumna Kristi Thomas '07 Reflects on Her Path to Partner at Sheppard Mullin Widener University Commonwealth Law School, 09.02.2025

4 W&H Tips To Stay Compliant During Emergencies
Law360, 10.09.2024

Speaking Engagements

"2026 Employment Law Update," Inland Empire HR Networking Group, Fontana, California, January 22, 2026

"Staff Discipline & Documentation, and Performance Improvement Plans (PIP)," 2025 Retirement Housing Foundation (RHF) Annual Management Conference, Long Beach, California, April 2, 2025

"Returning to Work During the COVID Pandemic," Orange County Bar Association Mommy Esq. Committee Webinar, September 21, 2021

Events

California Labor & Employment Law Update and Happy Hour
San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles & Orange County
October 01/08/09/16, 2024

Navigating Noncompete Agreements
2024 California HR Conference by PIHRA
Anaheim, CA, May 20 - 22, 2024

2024 California Employment Law Update by PIHRA - Riverside
Riverside Convention Center, 01.24.2024

Navigating Federal and California Leave of Absence Laws
11.06.2023

California Wage and Hour Law 2023 Update
Webinar, 06.21.2023

California Labor & Employment Law Update
Webinar, 04.13.2023

Injury Claims and Workers' Comp for Remote Employees: OSHA Requirements, Documentation, State Regs
Strafford Webinar
07.06.2022

Expanding Workers' Compensation Benefits to Employees that Test Positive for COVID-19: New California Law,
Senate Bill 1159
Federal Bar Association Webinar
10.21.2020

A-Z on Successfully Negotiating Settlement Agreements
Presented by Kristi Thomas
08.14.2019

Memberships

Member, Orange County Bar Association, Labor and Employment Section

Member, Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles

Executive Committee Member, ProVisors Costa Mesa

Podcasts & Webinars

Negligent Referrals and Other Ethical Traps in Potential Client Relationships
02.22.2023

Practices

Labor and Employment
Labor and Employment Counseling
Employee Hiring/Discipline/Termination
Employment Agreements
Handbooks and Personnel Policies
Harassment Investigation and Training
Wage and Hour Regulations
Labor and Employment Litigation
Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation
Wage and Hour Class Actions
Wrongful Termination

Industries

Food and Beverage
Healthcare

Education

J.D., Widener University School of Law, 2007, *cum laude*, Internal Editor of the Widener Law Journal, Dean's Honors

B.A., University of Pittsburgh, 2004, *cum laude*, Dean's Honors

Admissions

California
Pennsylvania
U.S. District Court for the Central District of California
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California