



Hirschfeld Kraemer

We work for employers



Derek K. Ishikawa

Contact Information

Hirschfeld Kraemer LLP

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Practices

- Class Actions & PAGA Claims
- Employee Relations & Wage/Hour Counseling
- Employment Litigation (Discrimination/Harassment)
- Higher Education Law
- Internal Investigations Services & Training
- Labor & Employment Arbitration
- Title IX Compliance & Investigator Training
- Trade Secrets/Unfair Competition Litigation
- Wage & Hour Litigation
- Workplace & Data Privacy

“Employers and higher education institutions operating in California face unique, often complex laws. I see myself as a business-minded, solutions-oriented partner to help these organizations address their compliance concerns—whether big or small.”



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Derek Ishikawa is a partner in the firm's Los Angeles office. He represents and counsels employers in all areas of labor and employment law, including discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and wrongful termination, as well as trade secret, breach of contract and employment-related tort claims. Derek also conducts workplace investigations, and regularly speaks and provides training on proper investigation techniques. Derek represents employers from a wide variety of industries, including hospitality, food and beverage, banking and finance, retail, higher education, and information technology. Derek also represents employers before administrative agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing. He also regularly counsels colleges and universities on employment matters, as well as student affairs, data privacy, risk management, and compliance issues, including Title IX.

Derek frequently writes and presents speeches, webinars, and podcasts on a range of employment law issues, and is regularly quoted in legal news publications. He has long been active in the Asian Pacific American Bar Association for Los Angeles County, currently serving as its President, and is also a member of the Japanese American Bar Association, the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession's Social Impact Incubator, and the 2019 National Asian Pacific Bar Association Leadership Advancement Program. Derek is also active with the National Association of College and University Attorneys, having served on the Committees for the Annual Conference and Legal Education, as well as the editorial and advisory boards of the Journal of College and University Law.

Prior to joining Hirschfeld Kraemer LLP, Derek defended consumer and wage and hour class action litigation at a mid-size international firm.

Education

J.D., M.P.P., University of California, Los Angeles School of Law, 2009; Co-Chief Managing Editor, Asian Pacific American Law Journal

M.Sc., London School of Economics, 2005

B.A., Pomona College, 2001

Recognitions

2024-2026 Selected to California Minority Counsel Program (CMCP) Ambassadors Council

2016-2020: Named by fellow members of State Bar as Southern California Super Lawyers Rising Star in Labor and Employment

2019: Selected to National Asia Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) Leadership Advancement Program, an honor bestowed upon only 24 attorneys nationwide

Admissions

California

U.S. District Court for the Central, Northern, Eastern, and Southern Districts of California

U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit



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Associations

Asian Pacific American Bar Association for Los Angeles County, Advisory Board Member, (2022-present); President (2021-2022); Executive Committee Member (2018-2021); Board of Governors (2010-2022)

National Association of College and University Attorneys, Committee on Program for Annual Conference Member (2022-present), Committee on Legal Education Member (2017-2022), Journal of College and University Law, Advisory Committee (2014-2017)

Executive Committee Member, Litigation Section, Los Angeles County Bar Association (2022-present)

Member, Japanese American Bar Association



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Matters

- Won unanimous defense jury verdict in Los Angeles Superior Court in age- and disability-discrimination lawsuit
- Won bench trial verdict in Los Angeles Superior Court in breach-of-contract lawsuit
- Won unanimous award on behalf of employer against two former employees in trade secret misappropriation/breach of contract action before FINRA arbitration panel
- Successfully obtained dismissal of putative class claims in state court following successful motion to compel class representative to arbitration on individual basis
- On behalf of college, obtained dismissal without leave to amend of student's discrimination, intentional infliction of emotional distress, fraud, misrepresentation, misconduct and contractual claim
- On behalf of college, successfully obtained summary judgment of student's contractual and negligence claims
- On behalf of college, successfully obtained summary judgment of former employee's claims race discrimination, failure to investigate, retaliation, and wrongful termination
- On behalf of university, successfully defended against administrative mandamus action filed by student challenging the results of academic misconduct proceedings
- On behalf of resort, successfully obtained summary adjudication of former employee's FMLA, whistleblower interference, wrongful termination claims, failure to provide employee records and waiting time penalty claims
- On behalf of a university, obtained summary adjudication of former worker's claims of disability-based discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and defamation
- On behalf of a college, successfully compelled student class representative to arbitration on individual basis in case asserting contractual and unfair competition claims and alleging entitlement due to COVID 19-related tuition refunds
- Obtained asylum for Syrian couple as pro bono counsel through Public Counsel, Immigrants' Rights Project
- On behalf of university, successfully defended on appeal trial court decision denying in part administrative writ filed by faculty member challenging results of sexual harassment proceedings
- On behalf of graduate seminary, successfully defended against administrative mandamus action filed by student challenging the results of sexual misconduct proceedings
- On behalf of university, successfully defended against administrative mandamus action filed by student challenging the results of sexual misconduct proceedings