

KAITLIN (KATIE) BROWN is a shareholder in our Corporate and Employment group and a member of the Firm's Executive Committee. Specializing in employment law, she focuses on counseling employers to take measures to prevent more costly claims of wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, and improper payment of wages.

Katie works closely with business owners, managers, and human resources directors to strategize best practices for managing employees, provide on-site training for employees and managers, and respond to employee concerns. She conducts investigations, prepares and negotiates severance agreements, drafts onboarding documents and employee handbooks, and defends against agency charges of discrimination and unfair labor practices. Katie also manages responses to audits conducted by the Department of Labor, and attends hearings related to claims for unemployment insurance benefits.

Katie has worked with clients in many industries, including automotive, corporate, medical, educational, non-profit, and financial. Her experiences range from administrative agencies to large firm litigation.

At the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Katie worked in the Reconsideration Unit, evaluating and deciding appeals of administrative decisions. Her additional experience in complex insurance, contract, and constitutional cases makes her a skilled advocate who values the benefit of reaching mutually agreeable resolutions and understands the costs and risks associated with litigation. The success of her practice is driven by her hard work, active listening, investigative research, and organized analysis.

She values professional relationships based on trust, authenticity, and respect.

Katie was recognized by Crain's Detroit Business among Notable Women in the Law in 2021, Michigan Lawyers Weekly 2021 class of Women in the Law and Go-To Lawyers in employment law, in the Oakland County Executive's Elite 40 Under 40 Class of 2020 and was named the 2018 Regeana Myrick Outstanding Young Lawyer by the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section. She has been recognized among *Michigan Lawyers Weekly's* 2016 Up and Coming Lawyers, named a Michigan *Super Lawyers* Rising Star since 2014, recognized as a "Top Lawyer in Metro Detroit" in Labor & Employment Law by DBusiness Magazine in 2023, and received the Women's Bar Association Member of the Year Award in 2017.

Katie led the Oakland County Bar Association's Diversity and Inclusion Committee as Chair from 2019 to 2021, during which time the organization developed an anti-racism statement and partnered with several professionals to lead and deepen conversations that will have a meaningful impact on the legal and community landscape throughout Metropolitan Detroit. For many years, Katie has been active in the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, where she has served on the Gender Equity Committee, among others.

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan recognized Katie with a Pro Bono Accomplishment Award. She has provided numerous *pro bono* services, including handling a prisoner's rights case, volunteering at Homeless Experience Legal Protection and

Common Ground's Legal Clinic, and coordinating *pro bono* activities for the Women's Bar Association.

Katie is admitted to practice law in Michigan, in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, and in Indiana.

Before beginning her legal career, Katie worked in New York City making documentaries for National Geographic International, The History Channel, and Discovery Health.

Representative Cases and Matters

- Advised employees and employers on contractual concerns, disability rights, and claims of wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.
- Updated and prepared employment policies and procedures, including onboarding documents.
- Conducted management and employee training regarding leadership skills and compliance requirements.
- Investigated sexual harassment complaints, employment disputes, and public safety concerns.
- Negotiated severance agreements for executives.

- Evaluated and revised employment contracts to assure legal compliance and protection of clients.
- Reviewed civil rights charges, including working with investigators, to determine validity of claims.
- Represented employers in investigations conducted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, and Michigan Wage and Hour Division.
- Successfully protested and appealed claims for unemployment insurance benefits, resulting in denial of benefits.
- Analyzed and handled complex litigation cases by reviewing voluminous records, preparing concise chronologies, conducting discovery/depositions, and resolving cases through case evaluation, facilitation, and dispositive motions.