



Heather J. Van Meter

Partner

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📡 employmentlawinmotion.com

“I draw on decades of local trial experience to delicately handle each client’s litigation needs and bring a lifetime of wisdom to provide practical, custom advice for clients.”

A Pacific Northwest native, Heather Van Meter has over 25 years of experience representing private, public, and not-for-profit entities throughout the Pacific Northwest and is recognized by her peers as a leading trial attorney. Her practice most recently has focused on employment advice and litigation, while she also has extensive experience in general civil litigation, including mass torts, drug and medical device and products liability, construction defects, negligence, condemnation, insurance coverage, and multi-district litigation in state and federal courts in Oregon and Washington. Heather’s background includes over eight years in the Oregon Department of Justice’s Civil Litigation Section as a senior assistant attorney general and trial attorney.

Heather began her legal career working for local, private law firms but then took advantage of an opportunity to teach in Vietnam, teaching commercial law and company law at RMIT-Saigon. Returning from Vietnam, Heather taught constitutional law and evidence at Lewis & Clark Law School. While working as a trial attorney, she obtained a master’s degree in human rights law at the University of Oxford, and a Ph.D. in international law at the University of Birmingham (England). Heather continues teaching to this day, including graduate school classes in ethics, sustainability, and social responsibility as well as law, history, and finance classes to middle and high school students. As a professor and teacher, she has gained the ability to explain complex legal matters in understandable ways.

In addition to serving her clients, Heather serves her community extensively and is a past member of the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (governor’s appointment), past elected Oregon Bar House of Delegates member, past president of the Marion County Bar Association, past president of Oregon Women Lawyers, past president of the U.S. District Court of Oregon Historical Society, and a former volunteer criminal prosecuting attorney in Hood River County. She is currently on the Oregon State Bar Nonprofit Law Executive Committee and is a member of the Nonprofit Association of Oregon.

Education

Ph.D, University of Birmingham, 2017

M.st, University of Oxford, 2011

J.D., Willamette University College of Law, 1998

M.B.A./M.P.A, Willamette University - Atkinson Graduate School of Management, 1998

B.A. University of California, 1994

Bar Admissions

Washington, 1999
Oregon, 1998

Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, District of Oregon

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Washington

U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Professional Activities

- Marion County Bar Association, Past President
- Oregon State Bar
 - Nonprofit Organizations Law Section
 - Executive Committee, Secretary, 2024-present
 - House of Delegates, Past Member
- Oregon Government Ethics Commission, Past Member
- Oregon Women Lawyers, Past President
- U.S. District Court of Oregon Historical Society, Past President

Civic Activities

- Volunteer criminal prosecuting attorney in Hood River County
- Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Member

Publications

Heather is a prolific writer on various topics. Following is a listing of publications since 2009. A complete list is available upon request.

- “U.S. Supreme Court Makes Discrimination Claims Easier to Prove by Recognizing Job Transfer Can Be Adverse Action,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (May 2024)
- “OSHA Amends Rule on Employee Representation During Safety Inspections,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Apr. 2024)
- “Learn the Ins and Outs of Mergers, and Other Alternatives,” *Campus Legal Advisor* (May 2024)
- “Winding Down and Bankruptcy Options for Nonprofit Entities,” Nonprofit Association of Oregon, coauthor (Mar. 2024)
- “Oregon Eliminates (Most of) OFLA in Favor of PLO, But OFLA Still Applies (Sometimes),” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Mar. 2024)
- “Employer Issues in Bankruptcy,” Miller Nash, *Bank Law Monitor* (Feb. 2024)
- “California Employees Must Receive Notice of Noncompete Invalidation by February 14,” Miller Nash, *Employment Law in Motion* (Feb. 2024)
- “No More Music in the Workplace: Analyzing *Sharp v. S&S Activewear*,” International Risk Management Institute, *Employment Practices Liability Consultant* (Fall 2023)
- “Revising The DIKW Pyramid And The Real Relationship Between Data, Information, Knowledge and Wisdom,” *Law, Technology and Humans Journal* (Nov. 2020)
- Various articles on county bar events – Marion County Bar Bulletin, Summer 2017 to present
- “Judge Anna J. Brown Takes Senior Status,” *Oregon Benchmarks* and *Oregon Women Lawyers Newsletter* (Summer 2017)
- “Judge Brown to be Honored with American Inns of Court’s Esteemed Professionalism Award,” *Oregon Benchmarks* and *Oregon Women Lawyers Newsletter* (Summer 2017)
- “‘Self-Defined Success,’ in Her Story: Lessons in Success from Lawyers Who Live It,” *American Bar Association Litigation Section* (2017)
- “The Difference a Decade Makes: Lifting Oregon’s Ban on Same-Sex Marriage,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Winter 2015)
- “Jerry Harris, Court Reporter Extraordinaire,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Winter 2015)
- “Profile: Noreen Kelly Saltveit McGraw,” *Oregon Benchmarks* (Summer 2014)
- “The Human Right to Water: Proposal For A Human Rights-Based Prioritization Approach,” Willamette University College of Law Human Right to Water Symposium (Spring 2011)

- “Improving State Party Reporting on Use of Available Resources for ICESCR,” University of Oxford (Apr. 2011)
- “Co-Presidents’ Messages,” Oregon Women Lawyers, *Advance Sheet* (2009-10)
- “Kulongoski Increases Diversity on Courts,” Oregon Women Lawyers, *Advance Sheet* (Winter 2010)
- “Candidates for Judicial Openings in the District Court of Oregon,” Oregon Benchmarks (Fall 2009)

Presentations

Heather is a frequent speaker on various topics. Following is a listing of presentations since 2009. A complete list is available upon request.

- “Cultivating Inclusion at OWLS Events,” Oregon Women Lawyers, OWLS Spring CLE (Apr. 2024)
- “2024 Legal Updates for HR,” Seattle SHRM, March Chapter Meeting (Mar. 2024)
- “Nonprofit Organizations,” Lewis & Clark Law School, Small Business Legal Clinic (Mar. 2024)
- “Three Primary Kinds of Employment/Quasi-Employment Relationships: Employees, Independent Contractors, and Volunteers,” Oregon State Bar, Nonprofit Organizations Law Section CLE (Dec. 2023)
- “Employee Speech and Religious Expression in Today’s Workplace,” King County Bar Association, In-House Counsel Section (Nov. 2023)
- “Litigation Traps for Non-Litigators,” Multnomah Bar Association, Young Lawyers Section (Nov. 2023)
- “No Whammies: Don’t Press Your Luck on Wage and Hour Issues,” Miller Nash, Employment Law Seminar (Oct. 2023)
- “Mental Health: An Interactive Panel Discussion,” Oregon SHRM (Oct. 2023)
- “West Coast Panel Discussion,” Nonprofit Insurance Alliance (NIA)/Alliance of Nonprofits for Insurance (ANI), EPLI Symposium (Sept. 2023)
- “Workplace Re-Opening and COVID-19,” Oregon State Bar (Apr. 2021)
- “COVID and Employers: OSHA Guidance for Maintaining ‘Safe Workplaces,’” Oregon State Bar (Apr. 2021)
- “Law Technology & Humans Conference,” Queensland University of Technology (Dec. 2019)
- “Elder Abuse CLE,” Willamette Valley Estate Planning Professionals (Nov. 2018)
- “Ethics and Elder Abuse CLE,” Marion County Bar Association (Nov. 2018)
- “Ethics CLE,” Oregon Department of Justice (Nov. 2018)
- “ABA Public Practice Panel,” Willamette College of Law (Oct. 2018)
- “Let Me Call You Sweetheart: Implicit Bias in Practice of Law,” Willamette Valley Inns of Court (Mar. 2018)
- “Salary Negotiation,” Willamette University, National Association of Women MBAs (Nov. 2017)
- “Hard to Get CLE Credits,” Marion County Bar Association (Nov. 2017)
- “Using State Consumer Protection Statutes to Address Corporate Greenwashing,” Santa Clara University (Sept. 2017)
- Regular speaker at Roberts High School Street Law Program, 2014 – 2018
- “Liquor and Ethics,” Marion County Bar Association (Apr. 2017)
- “Enforcing Human Rights Through the Private Sector,” University of Washington, Business and Human Rights Workshop (Sept. 2016)
- “Stories from the Conference Room,” Willamette Valley Inns of Court (Nov. 2015)
- “Government Litigation in the Age of E-Discovery,” Oregon Department of Justice (Oct. 2015)
- “ABA Public Practice Panel,” Willamette Law School (Sept. 2015)
- “Trial Preparation,” Willamette Moot Court Board (Sept. 2015)
- “Environmental Struggles, Justice Struggles,” Harvard Law School, Institute for Global Law and Policy Conference (June 2015)
- “Employment Law Training for ODOT Managers,” (Oct. 2014)
- “Pro Bono Litigation,” Oregon Chapter of the Federal Bar Association (Oct. 2014)
- “Road to the Bench,” Oregon Women Lawyers (2006-present)

- “Evidence Privileges,” Willamette College of Law (June 2013)
- “Governmental Immunities,” Oregon DOJ, Presentation to DAS-Risk (June 2013)
- “Attorney Fee Petitions,” Oregon DOJ (May 2013)
- “Complaint & Answer CLE,” Oregon DOJ (Apr. 2013)
- “Oregon Trial Practice: Emerging Trends and Multi-Jurisdictional Disputes,” Oregon State Bar (Oct. 2012)
- “Student Free Speech: Tinker to Present Day,” Lewis & Clark Law School, Federalist Society Debate (Mar. 2012)
- “Health Care Reform Constitutionality,” Lewis & Clark Law School, Federalist Society Debate (Nov. 2011)
- “State Reporting under ICESCR,” University of Oxford, Master’s in International Human Rights Law (Aug. 2011)
- “Current Topics in Mass Torts Litigation,” Oregon State Bar (Apr. 2010)
- “Breaking Barriers: How Far We Have Come, How Far We Have To Go,” Oregon Women Lawyers (2009)
- “Diversifying the Judiciary: Perspectives on Sonia Sotomayor, U.S. Supreme Court Nominee,” Mary Leonard Law Society (Aug. 2009)

Recognition & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (Portland, OR)
 - Arbitration Law, 2024-present
 - Employment Law—Management, 2024-present

Personal Activities

In her spare time, Heather enjoys spending time with her children and large family, hiking in the great outdoors, and volunteering in her community.