



John M. Stellwagen

Partner

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📡 employmentlawinmotion.com

John's practice focuses on labor contract administration, employee relations, bargaining, discipline and discharge, representation before state and federal agencies, labor arbitrations, preventive law/risk management, education, and municipal law. John also has extensive experience in employment and general litigation and trial work, successfully representing employers in wrongful discharge, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and wage and hour matters.

John has spent most of the past 20 years representing and providing legal guidance to public sector clients throughout Oregon and Washington, including higher education institutions, K-12 school districts, municipalities, public utility, special districts, healthcare providers, and tribal entities. This experience includes serving in both in-house and outside legal counsel roles which have provided John with insight into the complexities of governmental entities and the unique pressures and regulatory frameworks they must navigate. John is passionate about applying this experience and insight to help employers resolve complex employment and labor disputes, as well as provide practical and creative solutions to mitigate risk and avoid such conflicts.

Prior to joining Miller Nash, John worked at an employment, labor and employee benefits firm in the Pacific Northwest. Before that, John worked at Portland Public Schools as Senior Legal Counsel, focusing on employment and labor matters. Earlier in his career, John served as a Washington State Assistant Attorney General with the University of Washington Division. He supported the University of Washington and UW Medical Center on employment and labor matters. John also worked with the Oregon School Boards Association. He spent nine years in private practice in Seattle, Washington, primarily representing municipalities and school districts, and four and a half years with the Snohomish County Public Defender's Office.

Professional Activities

- Washington Bar Association, Member
- Oregon Bar Association, Member

Publications

- "Two More Anti-Employer Actions That Employers Are Going to Hate," *Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association Magazine* (Winter 2024)

Education

J.D., University of Washington School of Law, 1997

B.A., Gonzaga University, 1994

Bar Admissions

Washington, 1997
Oregon, 2007

Court Admissions

U.S. District Court,
Western District of
Washington, 2004

U.S. District Court, Eastern
District of Washington,
2005

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Ninth Circuit, 2006

Presentations

- “Bargaining: Current Trends and Emerging Challenges in Labor Relations,” Coalition of Oregon School Administrators and the Oregon Association of School Business Officials, Winter Conference (Jan. 2026)
- “Labor Relations 101,” Coalition of Oregon Law School Administrators, 45th Annual Law School Conference (Dec. 2025)
- “Mastering the Art of Due Process: A Refresher on Weingarten, Loudermill, and Garrity,” Northwest Public Power Association, HR and Labor Relations Conference (Oct. 2025)
- “Unemployment Benefits for Striking Workers,” Oregon Public Employer Labor Relations Association, Annual Training Conference (Oct. 2025)
- “Mastering the Art of Due Process: A Refresher on Weingarten, Loudermill, and Garrity,” National Public Employer Labor Relations Association, Annual Conference (June 2025)
- “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: 15th Annual Labor Relations Update,” Oregon Public Employer Labor Relations Association (May 2025)
- “Back to Basics: The Grievance Procedure, Discipline, Weingarten, Loudermill, and Garrity,” Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), Annual Oregon School Law Conference (Dec. 2024)
- “Adapting Contingency and Emergency Plan During Bargaining for Strike Avoidance,” Oregon Public Employer Labor Relations Association, Annual Training Conference (Nov. 2024)
- “Major Developments in Labor Law and Leading Employment Relations Board Cases,” Oregon State Bar, Labor & Employment Law Section Annual Conference, panelist (Oct. 2024)
- “Embracing Change in the Shifting Labor Relations Climate,” Miller Nash, Employment Law Seminar (Nov. 2024)
- “Unlocking Labor Success: Understand the Relationship Between the New NLRB and All Employers,” Northwest Human Resource Management Association (NHRMA), Annual Conference (Sept. 2024)
- “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: 14th Annual Labor Relations Update,” Oregon Public Employer Labor Relations Association (June 2024)
- “Current Bargaining Trends & Developments: Strategies for Schools to Foster Positive Union Relationships,” Oregon School Personnel Association, 2024 Spring Conference (May 2024)
- “Employee Disability Accommodations,” Oregon School Boards Association, PACE Day 2024 (Apr. 2024)
- “Current Trends in Public Labor Law: Special Considerations for Schools,” Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), Annual School Law Conference (Dec. 2023)
- “Bargaining Strategies, Tips, and Skills,” Oregon Public Employer Labor Relations Association (ORPELRA), Annual Training Conference, panelist (Nov. 2023)

Recognition & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (Portland, OR)
 - Litigation—Labor and Employment, 2026-present
 - Labor Law—Management, 2025-present

Personal Activities

Outside of the office, John enjoys cycling, tennis, soccer, and traveling with family and friends. John is also a reluctant runner in an ongoing effort to maintain fitness for the activities he actually enjoys.