

Shirley S. Lou-Magnuson

Partner

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employmentlawinmotion.com

"I am a seasoned advisor and litigator, leveraging both sides of my practice to guide savvy employers through their most challenging workplace issues. My approach prioritizes time-sensitive, out-of-the-box solutions crafted around our clients' business and strategic goals."

Shirley Lou-Magnuson is an experienced litigator who dedicates her practice to defending public and private entities from civil and regulatory liability in employment law matters. Shirley zealously defends employers before federal and state courts, administrative bodies, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Washington State Human Rights Commission on claims such as class actions, discrimination, harassment, wrongful discharge, and retaliation.

Although she is always prepared to defend employers in litigation, Shirley's strategic counsel empowers clients to find business-driven solutions that avoid litigation whenever feasible. Shirley advises on the full range of the employment lifecycle, including strategic recruitment, employment agreements, wage and hour compliance, employee performance management, workplace investigations, leave and disability accommodation, as well as layoffs and terminations.

Before joining Miller Nash, Shirley practiced employment law at a national law firm. Her experience also includes a judicial clerkship with the Honorable Katherine G. Leonard at the State of Hawai'i Intermediate Court of Appeals, as well as judicial externships with the Honorable Richard R. Clifton at the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Honorable Simeon R. Acoba at the State of Hawai'i Supreme Court.

Professional Activities

- Washington State Bar Association
- Hawai'i State Bar Association
  - Secretary, International Law Section, 2015

Education

J.D., University of Hawai'i Williams S. Richardson School of Law, *cum laude*, 2013

- Co-Editor in Chief, *Asian-Pacific Law & Policy Journal*
- Captain, Saul Leifkowitz Intellectual Property Moot Court Team
- Lawrence C. Foster Scholarship Recipient
- Carol Mon Lee Scholarship Recipient
- CALI Excellence for the Future Award: Contracts, Immigration Law, Legal Research & Writing
- Best Appellate Brief Award

B.A., Whitman College, economics & Asian studies, 2008

Bar Admissions

Alaska, 2024
Washington, 2017
Hawai'i, 2013

Civic Activities

- Yellow Wood Academy
  - Board of Directors, 2024-2026
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, Fellow, 2023

Representative Experience

Employment Litigation

- As lead counsel in a confidential federal class action matter, prevailed on summary judgment after oral argument, dismissing all claims alleging independent contractor misclassification in 3,400-member class action. The matter is pending appeal (2025).*
- Prevailed on summary judgment dismissing all claims alleging race discrimination and retaliation. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed dismissal. *Robertson v. Catholic Community Services of Western Washington*, No. 22-35965 (9th Cir. 2023).*

**Prior to joining Miller Nash*

Publications

- "Telecommuting in the Post-Pandemic Age and Legal Considerations," Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (Aug. 2023)

Presentations

- "Non-competes, Breaks, Personnel Files—oh my! Recent Updates in Washington Employment Law," Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys, 2026 Fall Conference (Sept. 2026)
- "Non-competes, Breaks, Personnel Files—oh my!," Skagit-Island Chapter Society for Human Resource Management (Sept. 2026)
- "Wage and Hour," Association of Washington Business, 2026 HR & Employment Law Webinar Series (Apr. 2026)
- "Empowered Separations: Legal Strategies for Turning Firings into Opportunities," Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys (Oct. 2025)
- "Empowered Separations: Legal Strategies for Turning Firings into Opportunities," Southeastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (Sept. 2025)
- "Wage and Hour," Association of Washington Business, 2025 HR & Employment Law Webinar Series (Apr. 2025)
- "Labor and Employment Law," The Seminar Group (Dec. 2024)
- "Wage and Hour," Association of Washington Business, 2024 HR & Employment Law Webinar Series (Apr. 2024)
- "Managing a Remote Workforce," Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys (Apr. 2023)
- "Wage and Hour," Association of Washington Business (Apr. 2023)

Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Washington

U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

U.S. District Court, District of Hawai'i

Languages

Chinese (Mandarin)

- "Avoiding Gotcha: Steps Employers Should Take to Investigate Complaints and Reduce the Risk of Retaliation Claims," Northwest Human Resource Management Association, 2022 NHRMA Conference (Oct. 2022)

Recognition & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch®* (Seattle, WA)
  - Labor and Employment Law—Management, 2021-2025
  - Litigation—Labor and Employment, 2024-2025
- Selected for inclusion as a Washington Super Lawyer—Rising Star, 2022-2024

Personal Activities

Outside of her work community, Shirley is fully engaged in her community and at home. First, Shirley prioritizes time with her husband, Matt, and daughter Ailsa and son Arran. She also serves on boards and associations, advocating for causes that she is passionate about, such as educational institutions dedicated to helping neurodiverse children and young adults.