

FordHarrison's Global Legal Services FAQ



Managing employment matters outside your home country poses a challenge to every global company. Cross-border matters in particular can present a number of issues that often result in costly delays. Corporate leaders in the home office need assurance that employment issues are handled consistently, through a single point of contact, in a cost-effective manner that is aligned with their corporate values wherever they do business.

FordHarrison's Global Legal Services team provides a turnkey solution to the management of multi-jurisdictional employment law projects across more than 120 countries around the world. Working with the support of global labor and employment alliance, Ius Laboris, FordHarrison's Global Legal Services team handles cross-border employment matters that range from small, day-to-day employment issues, to the management of large, multi-national global employment transactions.

How do we do it?

With FordHarrison's Global Legal Services team, communication is key. We begin every project by identifying and outlining the issues with the client, determining the goals for the project, and then developing and executing a plan. Our attorneys have considerable experience working in international matters, allowing the bulk of the work to be handled internally. Indeed, unlike most other firms, our Global team is staffed by lawyers whose practice is focused on global services. Should the need arise for consultation with local counsel, our attorneys will utilize FordHarrison's status as the sole U.S. member of Ius Laboris, as well as their own personal networks of global contacts, to engage the proper counsel for the project. We present local counsel with highly specific, narrowly-scoped questions in order to expedite the necessary response. From there, we are able to quickly reply to the clients in terminology familiar to U.S. lawyers and HR professionals.

Regardless of the size of the project, our fundamental goals remain the same:

- Shorten and simplify the life cycle of every matter, reducing costs and improving efficiency;
- Provide corporate management, legal, and HR a single point of contact for all such matters, enhancing transparency on HR/legal practices and legal costs around the world;
- Relieve in-house counsel of the burden of coordinating with multiple lawyers in multiple countries, as well as diminishing the need for in-house counsel to become familiar with local labor and employment laws and customs around the globe.

If you would like us to prepare a proposal to assist your company with your labor and employment law needs, please contact global@fordharrison.com.



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FAQ

1. "Can't our in-house counsel handle these matters?"

If your company is fortunate enough to have in-house counsel who are well-versed in labor and employment laws both domestically and internationally, then you may not have need for outside counsel. However, many companies rely on their U.S. based legal departments to manage ongoing matters in all areas of law in both the U.S. and abroad. When faced with a domestic matter, the variety of labor and employment laws specific to each state often require that these legal departments call upon outside counsel who can interpret these local laws and act on behalf of the company. Global law is much the same, although the additional challenges of unique and unfamiliar systems of law, difficulties in language and interpretation, and a variety of local customs can present significant barriers to success for legal departments who may be unprepared to address these challenges, and who are already stretched razor thin managing multiple domestic and international projects.

FordHarrison's Global Legal Services team is meant to remove that burden from in-house counsel, allowing them to concentrate on other matters. Our Global Legal Services attorneys have a vast bank of knowledge with regard to labor and employment in a number of international jurisdictions. Our experience in global matters allows us the ability to research, investigate, and interpret the appropriate responses for our clients, with or without the use of local counsel. It is our goal to help companies navigate global labor and employment issues efficiently, seamlessly, and expertly.

2. "Can't we just reach out directly to local counsel?"

You certainly can. The challenge is that your legal department staff may not have adequate knowledge of employment laws in a particular global jurisdiction. Without that context, your team will not have the tools necessary to address the global issues at hand, and with legal department costs being monitored more closely than ever before, getting your team up to speed on local laws and customs could become a costly proposition. Likewise, your chosen local counsel may not have knowledge of your company's culture or legal strategy for these types of matters, and may not be fluent in the issues that face your company and its legal department in labor and employment matters at home and abroad. The likelihood of increased spending over the life-cycle of the project rises exponentially as all parties struggle with the legal and cultural complications inherent in global, cross-border matters.

3. "Aren't you just double-billing for work that could be done more efficiently if we went right to local counsel?"

Absolutely not. Indeed, one of our tenets is that we don't do anything unless it provides value to our client.

We have developed both a very robust process for handling international matters, as well as an incredible database of substantive expertise. While we are not admitted to practice in every country in the world, we have a great deal of experiential knowledge in global labor and employment laws and customs in a number of countries, as well as a global network of trusted colleagues with whom we have developed a rapport who serve as advisors and local counsel. In most cases, these resources allow our FordHarrison Global Legal Services team to sufficiently gather relevant facts, conduct initial analysis, and collect only the most essential information from local counsel. Our considerable experience helps minimize costs by reducing the overall life-cycle of most every matter. As a result, our clients are provided a level of comfort and confidence that their global labor and employment needs are being met efficiently and effectively.