

RUSSELL W. JACKSON

Partner / Memphis

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Russell serves on FordHarrison's Executive Committee and as the managing partner for FordHarrison's Memphis office. He is known for his extreme responsiveness and excellent communication with clients.

Russell is a go-to trusted counselor for employers facing the full spectrum of labor and employment challenges. Russell's approach puts clients first, uniting preventive foresight with practical execution to deliver creative, business-driven solutions that remain legally compliant. Employers value Russell's inventive, hard-hitting and aggressive strategies to protect their interests in litigation.

Comprehensive Practice, Nationwide Reach

- » Litigation: Russell defends companies coast-to-coast against claims of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wrongful discharge, restrictive-covenant breaches, and wage-and-hour violations. He appears regularly before federal and state courts as well as the EEOC, DOL, NLRB, OSHA, and other agencies.
- » Counseling: From terminations and discipline to ADA, FMLA, PWFA leave and accommodation requests, trade-secret protection, wage-and-hour audits, and unfair-labor-practice matters, Russell steers employers through every stage of the employment relationship.
- » Training & Investigations: An engaging teacher and meticulous investigator, Russell equips executives, HR teams, and frontline supervisors with practical skills on topics such as harassment prevention, respectful-workplace culture, leave management, investigation best practices, union avoidance, and independent contractor v. employee classification.

Proven Results & Industry Diversity

Licensed in Tennessee and Mississippi and admitted in courts nationwide, Russell has obtained victories at every level – including the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fifth, Sixth, and Eleventh Circuits and briefing before the U.S. Supreme Court. His client roster spans residential services, manufacturing, logistics, insurance, healthcare,

EDUCATION

- » Case Western Reserve University (J.D., 2008)
- » Emory University (B.A., 2004)

BAR ADMISSIONS

- » Tennessee
- » Mississippi

COURT ADMISSIONS

- » U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- » U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- » U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas
- » U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas
- » U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland
- » U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan
- » U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee
- » U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee

FIRM LEADERSHIP

- » Executive Committee
- » Management Group
- » Memphis Office Managing

finance, property management, staffing, retail, and more.

Partner

Leadership & Community Commitment

As Office Managing Partner of the firm's Memphis office, Russell fosters an energizing, collaborative culture. A Memphis native, he gives back through board service with several local nonprofits, including having served as president of a 501(c)(3) organization. Russell delivers inventive, legally sound solutions that advance business goals – whether preventing problems before they arise or winning high-stakes disputes when they do.

Representative Experience

- » Successfully tried a federal jury trial in the Southern District of Alabama for a large manufacturing client in a sex discrimination lawsuit. The jury returned a verdict for employer.
- » Obtained summary judgment on an age discrimination claim and state law claim under public policy retaliation in a very contentious matter for a manufacturing client.
- » Negotiated a favorable settlement in an FLSA collective action in the Northern District of Mississippi for a regional healthcare client.
- » Obtained temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction for national home services company in the Western District of Tennessee.
- » Successfully tried a federal jury trial in the Western District of Tennessee for a large financial services company in an age discrimination failure to hire lawsuit. The jury returned a verdict for the employer.
- » Served as co-counsel in a federal bench trial in the Eastern District of Arkansas for a national agricultural retail supplier in a race discrimination lawsuit. Judgment was entered for the employer.
- » Successfully defended a retail client in arbitration before the AAA in a suit alleging reverse race discrimination, retaliation, hostile work environment, intentional infliction of emotional distress, negligent infliction of emotional distress and violations of the Tennessee Public Protection Act. The arbitrator found in favor of the employer.
- » Successfully argued before the Tennessee Court of Appeals in a lawsuit alleging wrongful denial of unemployment benefits.
- » Served as lead counsel in a Department of Labor audit into

Fair Labor Standards Act compliance for a national packaging and distribution client.

- » Negotiated a favorable settlement in an FLSA collective action in the Western District of Tennessee for a national healthcare client.
- » Received a dismissal for a national insurance client in an ERISA action in the Western District of Tennessee alleging wrongful denial of benefits.
- » Obtained dismissals, including summary judgment, in countless lawsuits alleging claims under virtually every federal employment statute and Tennessee state employment law claims.

Honors & Awards

- » *The Best Lawyers in America* - Employment Law - Management, Litigation - Labor and Employment (2021-2026)
- » "Mid-South Rising Stars," *Super Lawyers Magazine* (2018-2021)

Memberships

- » American Bar Association
- » Tennessee Bar Association
- » Federal Bar Association
- » Memphis Bar Association (Labor and Employment Law Section)
- » Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) – Memphis Chapter

News & Insights

- » SourceBook - Co-Editor, FordHarrison's Labor & Employment Law Sourcebook, Alternative Dispute Resolution
- » August 21, 2025 - Five Tennessee-Based FordHarrison Attorneys Listed in the 2026 Best Lawyers in America and Three Listed in Ones to Watch
- » April 18, 2024 - Supreme Court Rules that the FAA's Arbitration Exemption is Not Limited to Transportation Industry
- » August 17, 2023 - Five Tennessee-Based FordHarrison Attorneys Listed in the 2024 Best Lawyers in America and Three Listed in Ones to Watch

- » March 22, 2022 - Jury Trial Waivers May be an Option for Employers in the Wake of the Ending Arbitration of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Act

Events

- » October 15, 2025 - Complimentary Lunch & Learn: Emerging Workplace Challenges: AI Tools and Reasonable Accommodations and Leave - Memphis, TN
- » November 13, 2024 - Laws & Lunch: Supreme Court Shake-Ups and EEOC Harassment Updates - Complimentary Lunch & Learn (Memphis, TN)
- » October 27, 2023 - "What You Need to Know About the New EEOC, Supreme Court & NLRB Initiatives" Complimentary Lunch & Learn - Memphis, TN
- » September 19, 2023 - "Creating & Maintaining Positive Employee Relations: A Primer on Unions & Union Avoidance," West Tennessee SHRM - Memphis, TN
- » April 20, 2023 - "2023 Labor and Employment Law Update" Complimentary Breakfast Briefing - Memphis, TN

Offices

- » *Memphis:*
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