FORDHARRISON

MICHAEL J. SPAGNOLA

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Mike Spagnola has dedicated his practice to representing employers in all facets of labor and employment law. He focuses on solving difficult and complicated labor and employment matters and is a fierce and tireless advocate for his clients.

Mike represents employers exclusively in connection with all aspects of labor and employment law. Mike prides himself on being a “soup to nuts” labor and employment lawyer, specializing in both traditional labor law and employment law. This allows Mike to service his clients with respect to all of the client's labor and employment law needs.

Mike represents management in connection with labor relations matters including unfair labor practice charges, union election petitions, grievance arbitrations, and serving as lead negotiator in collective bargaining. He also counsels management on union avoidance and represents employer trustees in deadlock arbitrations under the Labor Management Relations Act.

Mike also appears on behalf of clients in state and federal courts and before administrative agencies, for cases relating to discrimination, retaliation, harassment, whistleblowing, wrongful discharge, wage and hour law, worker classification, unemployment compensation, FMLA, workplace torts, breach of contract, non-competition agreements, and trade secret misappropriation. Mike also handles severance negotiations, negotiates contractual language, and represents businesses in commercial litigation.

In addition to handling litigation and labor relations matters, Mike counsels employers on preventive labor and employment law measures, with a focus on lawful employee discipline, and statutory, regulatory, and contractual compliance. He works with management to identify problematic labor and employment law issues, and develops strategies, policies and procedures to assist in litigation avoidance.

While in law school, Mike was a member of the Quinnipiac University Law Review. Mike also served as a Judicial Intern to the Honorable Peter C. Dorsey, District Judge for the United States

EDUCATION

- Quinnipiac University School of Law (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2004)
- Southern Connecticut State University (B.S., *magna cum laude*, 2001)

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Connecticut

COURT ADMISSIONS

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

District Court in Connecticut.

Representative Experience

- Successfully represented company before the Connecticut Supreme Court in case of first impression concerning Part C of Connecticut's "ABC Test" for determining independent contractor status.
- Successfully negotiated numerous collective bargaining agreements within both economic and language measures of success identified by clients prior to commencement of negotiations.
- Successfully navigated and handled numerous grievances and arbitrations in connection with an onslaught of filings as part of a client's ongoing labor dispute.
- Convinced Region of NLRB that complaint should issue against labor union in charge brought by multi-employer group under Section 8(b)(4) of the NLRA (Secondary Boycott Provisions).
- Obtained dismissal of NLRB charge against employer alleging that charging party, a former steward for an aggressive hospitality union, was terminated for filing and processing grievances under CBA.
- Obtained arbitration awards finding that health care client had just cause for terminating multiple employees who refused to work shifts under the guise of safety concerns, with strong reliance on staffing regulations and the "work now, grieve later" doctrine.
- Obtained favorable monetary and remedial settlement in connection with grievance filed by health care client against union for violation of no-strike clause in CBA.
- Obtained summary judgment on all claims in discrimination, harassment, wage and retaliation case brought against employer and two supervisors; also obtained award of attorney's fees against the plaintiff for discovery violations.
- Obtained summary judgment for employer based on Garmon preemption in free speech case brought under Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-51q.
- Successfully defended employer and officers in seven figure case for unpaid sales commission by employee.
- Obtained no reasonable cause finding in complicated age discrimination, harassment and retaliation case brought against national software company in the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

- Obtained dismissal of novel HIPAA complaint filed against employer with the Connecticut Attorney General's Office.
- Negotiated successful reductions to wages, penalties and interest in wage and hour investigations and audits of numerous employers in all sectors and industries.

Honors & Awards

- *Best Lawyers in America - Employment Law Management and Litigation - Labor and Employment (2023-2027)*

Memberships

- Connecticut Bar Association
- Hartford County Bar Association

News & Insights

- August 21, 2025 - Four FordHarrison Attorneys Named to 2026 Connecticut Super Lawyers List and Two Listed in Ones To Watch
- December 20, 2024 - Reminder!! Connecticut's Expanded Paid Sick Leave Law Takes Effect January 1, 2025
- August 16, 2024 - Four Hartford-Based FordHarrison Attorneys Listed in the 2025 Best Lawyers in America
- May 22, 2024 - What Connecticut Employers Need to Know About the Upcoming Changes to Connecticut's Paid Sick Leave Law
- August 17, 2023 - Five Hartford-Based FordHarrison Attorney Listed in the 2024 Best Lawyers in America

Offices

- *Hartford:*
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