

JOSEPH H. HARRIS

Partner / Tampa, New York City

jhharris@fordharrison.com / P: 813-261-7868



Joseph Harris focuses his employment law practice on litigation, compliance counseling, and risk management.

Joe defends employers in federal and state courts, and before administrative agencies, in matters involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and wage-hour law violations. He also represents employers in disputes involving the breach of post-employment restrictive covenants, such as noncompetition and nonsolicitation agreements.

In addition, Joe conducts internal investigations and counsels employers on compliance with local, state, and federal employment laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

Joe advises employers on workforce strategies and compliance programs designed to reduce legal exposure. He drafts and negotiates employment agreements, separation packages, arbitration agreements, and restrictive covenants, and provides guidance on day-to-day employment issues, including terminations, accommodations, and complaint resolution. Joe has particular experience helping businesses navigate internal complaints, and executive-level employment issues.

Joe frequently collaborates with employers to develop and audit workplace policies, employee handbooks, and internal protocols to ensure legal compliance and to reflect evolving best practices. He provides tailored anti-harassment and anti-discrimination training and has served as a trusted advisor to human resources teams and in-house counsel navigating high-stakes employment decisions. His clients span a wide range of industries, including financial services, healthcare, media, hospitality, real estate, and professional services.

A respected voice on employment law developments, Joe is often quoted in national media and legal publications, and has contributed to dozens of articles on workplace law. He is a sought-after speaker and has presented for organizations such as the Association of Corporate Counsel, SHRM, and various academic

EDUCATION

- » Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law (J.D., 2007)
- » Haverford College (B.A., 2004)
- » Oxford University (2000-2001)

BAR ADMISSIONS

- » New York
- » Florida

COURT ADMISSIONS

- » Florida State Courts
- » U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York
- » U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York
- » New York State Courts

institutions on topics ranging from pay equity and independent contractor classification to managing internal investigations and preventing workplace misconduct.

Representative Experience

- » Defended employer in federal court against allegations that it retaliated against employee for reporting coworker's homophobic statements.
- » Defended employer against U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEOC) Commission disability discrimination charge alleging that employer failed to accommodate, and discriminated against, employee shortly after cancer diagnosis.
- » Defended employer in state court against disability discrimination claim alleging that employer failed to accommodate, and discriminated against, employee who suffered heart attack and underwent bypass surgery.
- » Defended employer in state court against allegations that it discriminated against its employees on the basis of race and their lawful off-duty use of marijuana.
- » Defended employer in state court against allegations that it terminated employee in retaliation for reporting unsafe working conditions.
- » Defended employer in state court against claim that it was vicariously liable for alleged workplace assault by coworker.
- » Defended employer in class and collective action in federal court brought by group of interns, alleging violations of state and federal wage-hour laws.
- » Defended employer in class and collective action in federal court against allegations by group of independent contractors that they were misclassified employees entitled to minimum wage and overtime.
- » Represented employer in U.S. Department of Labor audit of company's wage-hour practices.
- » Represented employer in arbitration against employee who breached non-competition, non-solicitation, and confidentiality agreement.
- » Represented employer in state court against employee who breached non-solicitation agreement.
- » Defended business owner in state Department of Labor administrative proceeding seeking to hold owner personally liable for millions of dollars in allegedly unpaid wages and

related civil penalties.

- » Defended employer against allegations by state Department of Labor that employer retaliated against employee by calling the police in response to employee's demand for payment of commissions.
- » Defended employer in state court against retaliation claim, alleging that employer terminated employee for complaining about late payment of wages.
- » Defended employer against allegations that it created a hostile work environment on the basis of sex, and then terminated employee and employee's spouse after employee complained about it.
- » Defended employer against allegations that executive conditioned employee's employment on submission to sexual relationship, and then terminated employee when employee refused.
- » Defended employer against allegations that company executives attempted to coerce employee into drug use and sexual activity, and then terminated employee when employee reported it.

Honors & Awards

- » "Best Lawyers in America," Employment Law - Management (2024 - 2026)
- » New York Metro "Super Lawyers," *Super Lawyers Magazine* (2020 - 2026)
- » "AV Preeminent" Rating (2015 - Present)
- » New York Metro "Rising Stars," *Super Lawyers Magazine* (2013 - 2019)
- » "Top 40 Under 40," Labor & Employment Law, New York, American Society of Legal Advocates (2019)
- » "Attorney of the Year Award," Finalist, *Smart CEO Magazine* (2014)

News & Insights

- » November 19, 2025 - Joseph H. Harris Named to 2025 New York Super Lawyers List and Steven Balken Listed in Ones To Watch
- » July 25, 2025 - "FordHarrison Sees Demand Through the Roof for Counsel on Trump Administration's Labor Law Enforcement", Law.com

- » July 21, 2025 - FordHarrison Adds Two Partners in Its New York City and Tampa Offices
- » July 21, 2025 - "FordHarrison Adds Barton, Epstein Becker Employment Pros", Law360
- » May 2023 - "Goldman Sachs to Pay \$215 Million to Settle Gender Bias Claims." Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Events

- » May 2023 - "A Whole New World: Navigating the Changing Employment Law Landscape." Primerus International Summit
- » March 2023 - "Employment Law Update: Spring 2023." Sponsored by the TemPositions Group of Companies and the HR Roundtable
- » January 2023 - "A Blessing in Disguise: Why Employers Should Welcome the FTC's Proposed Non-Compete Ban." Association of Corporate Counsel
- » December 2022 - "Avoiding Pay Equity Traps." Primerus Labor & Employment Group
- » July 2022 - "Employment Law Risks, Compliance, and Solutions." New York Business Leaders Podcast

Offices

- » *Tampa:*
401 East Jackson Street, Suite 2500
Tampa, Florida 33602
- » *New York:*
366 Madison Avenue, 7th floor
New York, New York 10017