

## J. Travis Hockaday

ATTORNEY

Chair, Workplace Law

thockaday@smithlaw.com

919.821.6757



### OVERVIEW

Travis Hockaday leads the firm's Employment, Labor and Human Resources practice. He is recognized by *Best Lawyers*® 2021 in Litigation - Labor and Employment, and by *Benchmark Litigation* as a North Carolina Labor & Employment Star for 2021. His practice focuses on providing counseling and risk management advice on significant employment-related matters to both public and private companies across a variety of industries, identifying and managing employment-related issues in mergers, acquisitions, and reorganizations, and drafting complex employment and severance agreements for companies and C-suite executives. From 2010 to 2013, Travis provided counseling and risk management services on employment-related matters to a Fortune 500 company's legal department under a secondment arrangement.

Travis has extensive experience assisting employers with worker classification and co-employment issues, work health (ADA, FMLA, GINA) matters, and wage and hour compliance. He also conducts investigations into discrimination and harassment complaints, develops workplace policies, and advises employers on terminations, disciplinary actions and handling employee grievances. Travis regularly defends employers in federal and state courts and agencies (including the EEOC, U.S. DOL and U.S. DOJ) against discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wage and hour and whistleblower claims (including systemic discrimination claims).

Travis frequently develops and delivers training programs for executives, managers and human resources professionals, and is a co-author of the *North Carolina Human Resources Manual*, the 700-page authoritative guide for North Carolina employers.

### EXPERIENCE

- Defending employers against claims involving discrimination, wrongful discharge, retaliation, harassment and civil rights claims.
- Defending wage and hour, ERISA, and other benefit-related claims.
- Representing clients in investigations conducted by both federal and state Departments of Labor, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice.
- Representing clients before the North Carolina Division of Employment Security.
- Advising clients regarding the development of effective employee handbooks, policies and practices.

- Representing employers and individuals in connection with allegations of violation of non-compete agreements, unfair competition and tortious interference with contract.
- Providing training to management, human resource professionals and employees regarding numerous employment-related topics, including workplace discrimination and harassment, religion in the workplace, unemployment compensation, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.
- Advising clients on variety of state and federal regulatory issues.
- Serving as outside counsel to a state licensing agency.
- Advised a EU-based clinical research organization in a definitive agreement to acquire the pharmacovigilance business from a global, listed healthcare services company for approximately \$10,000,000 in cash.
- Advised a contract research organization in a definitive agreement to acquire a specialized contract research organization for the biotechnology industry.
- Advised a private equity fund and its contract research solutions portfolio company in their acquisition of a statistical programming, consulting, and data management company.
- Advised a company specializing in video game and software development in a definitive agreement to acquire a company that developed a presence-based social networking platform connecting users online through live video on mobile and desktop apps.
- Advised a private equity fund in its acquisition of a leading provider of staffing resources to the biotechnology, pharmaceutical and medical device companies for clinical trial needs.
- Advised a leading CRO in Asia on the employment law aspects of its acquisition of CRO assets in the United States.
- Advised a publicly-traded health services company on the employment law aspects of its acquisition of a health services division of a privately-held company for \$105 million in cash.
- Advised an online gaming company in a definitive agreement to acquire an online 3-D modeling company.
- Advised an online gaming company in an acquisition of a UK-based pioneer in the "kidtech" market.
- Advised a leading healthcare services provider on the employment law aspects of its \$60 million cash acquisition of a global sourcing company.
- Advised a private equity-backed medical device repair services company on the employment law aspects of its sale of its wholly-owned operating subsidiaries to a strategic buyer operating in the medical device repair services industry.
- Advised a publicly-traded health information technologies and clinical research company on the employment law aspects of its acquisition of a consulting business focusing on orphan drug designations.
- Advised a private equity fund on the employment law aspects of its acquisition of a specialty pharmaceutical company.
- Advised a frozen foods company on the employment law aspects of its definitive agreement to acquire a frozen snacks business.
- Represented a private equity fund in its acquisition of a leading digital patient recruitment company.

---

## CREDENTIALS

### Recognition

- *Benchmark Litigation*, North Carolina Labor and Employment Star (2020-2021, 2023-2024)
- Best Lawyers®, Litigation - Labor and Employment (2019-2024)
- North Carolina *Super Lawyers*, Rising Star (2011, 2018)

---

### Education

- University of North Carolina, J.D., 2003
- Campbell University, B.A., *summa cum laude*, 2000

---

### Bar & Court Admissions

- North Carolina
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of North Carolina

