



RUTH VAFEK

Partner

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Ruth Vafek is a partner in Berger Singerman's Tallahassee office. Ruth focuses her practice on Labor and Employment Law and Intellectual Property. She has extensive litigation experience in both areas; however, she especially enjoys working with clients to identify, prevent, and resolve employment and IP issues in order to minimize litigation risk and support clients to success.

Prior to and during law school she worked in multiple industries, including as in-house HR consultant in a California tech company, in the restaurant industry, and with the US government. This experience helps her provide practical advice in the legal context, because she understands the numerous constraints and variables that businesses must juggle every day.

Ruth is also Florida Supreme Court certified as a Circuit Civil Mediator and leverages the same pragmatism and creativity to assist with the resolution of disputes as a neutral.

Education

J.D., *cum laude*, Santa Clara University School of Law
B.A. in International and Intercultural Studies, *with honors*, Goucher College

Bar Admissions

Florida
Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil Mediator
Supreme Court of the United States
U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida

Practice Teams

Dispute Resolution

Practice Areas

Labor & Employment
Intellectual Property

Representative Matters

- Defending employers in employment litigation involving Title VII, ADA, ADEA, and FCRA claims.
- Representing both employers and executive level employees in connection with restrictive covenants, such as non-compete agreements.
- Representing employers at the EEOC and FCHR.
- Investigating, advising employers, and resolving employee complaints and grievances.
- Drafting employment agreements, employee handbooks and policies, and non-disclosure/confidentiality agreements.
- Trademark and copyright registration and portfolio counseling.
- Negotiation and drafting of licensing and development agreements, including SaaS/PaaS agreements.
- Litigating all types of infringement and licensing dispute claims.
- Developed and negotiated groundbreaking Master Services Agreement allocating IP rights and obligations in order to facilitate functional joint research, development, and commercialization between multiple parties.

Community Activities / Associations

- Tallahassee Bar Association Member
- Tallahassee Women Lawyers and Florida Association of Women Lawyers Member
- Former member and Chair of the Board of Directors, Tallahassee Urban League
- Former member of Board of Directors, Housing Leadership Council
- United Way workplace campaign coordinator for multiple years at prior firm

In the News

HR Magazine Quotes Ruth Vafek in "The Childcare Crisis"
April 5, 2024

The Society for Human Resource Management Features Ruth Vafek in "How to Help Workers with Child Care Struggles"
March 14, 2024

HR Dive Quotes Ruth Vafek in "How Should HR Handle Employee Social Media Posts on the Israel-Hamas War?"

December 7, 2023

The Society for Human Resource Management Features Ruth Vafek in "Employer Wins Case Over Lactation Accommodations."

December 6, 2023

Inc. Quotes Ruth Vafek in "How Companies Can Support Women Going Through Menopause"

June 30, 2023

Sun Sentinel Quotes Ruth Vafek in, "Signs of migrant flight grow ahead of new Florida immigration law"

May 22, 2023

Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce Quotes Ruth Vafek in, "Staying Informed on Family and Emergency Leave Policy During COVID-19"

April 20, 2020

Publications

Sun-Sentinel "From Miami to Tallahassee, Potential Changes to Labor Laws Could Affect How Businesses Operate"

November 3, 2023

Events & Speaking Engagements

Ruth Vafek, Presenter, "The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and PUMP Act for 2024: Practical Application for Employers," Lexology Masterclass

February 7, 2024

Ruth Vafek, Speaker, "Copyright Law", FSU Law

November 28, 2023

Ruth Vafek, Presenter, "New Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and PUMP Act," Legal Administrators Association of Tallahassee

February 15, 2023

Ruth Vafek, Presenter, "Intellectual Property Issues for Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses"

June 21, 2022

Ruth Vafek, Co-Panelist, Big Bend Society for Human Resource Management

2019

Doing Business in Florida Blog

DOL Implements New Overtime Thresholds

April 24, 2024

Breaking News: FTC Approves Nationwide Ban on Noncompete Clauses – What It Means for Your Business

April 23, 2024

Client Alert: Florida's New Immigration Law and Implications for Private Employers

June 14, 2023

Client Alert: New Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act): What Do Private Employers Need to Know to Comply?

March 14, 2023

Prior Affiliations

- Ausley McMullen
- Intransa, Inc.