WALTER | HAVERFIELD
Attorneys At Law

RINA R. RUSSO

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RINA R. RUSSO 2021

SERVICES

Labor Relations / Collective Bargaining

Healthcare and Dental

Labor and Employment

Education

Education Labor and Employment Law

Labor and Employment Litigation

EDUCATION

Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, J.D., 2011, *magna cum laude*

John Carroll University, B.A., 2008, *cum laude*

LICENSED TO PRACTICE

Ohio

United States District Court, Northern District of Ohio

United States District Court, Southern District of Ohio

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

OVERVIEW

Rina Russo has significant experience representing employers in the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements as well as allegations of discrimination and harassment. She works with private and public sector employers in matters involving failure to accommodate, wage/hour violations and enforcement of restrictive covenants before federal and state courts and administrative agencies. Her litigation practice includes single plaintiff, class and collective actions.

Russo also devotes a significant amount of time to counseling employers in all aspects of the employment relationship. This includes employee policies and handbooks, investigations, reasonable accommodation of disabilities and religious practices, wage and hour compliance and employee classification. It also includes leaves of absence, whistleblower protections, retaliation, affirmative action programs, trade secret protection, discipline, termination, and separation and release agreements.

Russo joined Walter | Haverfield in September 2017 as an associate. She began her legal career as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Candace J. Smith, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

EXPERIENCE

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT LITIGATION

- Defended debtor employer in bankruptcy court in certified class action seeking damages under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act of 1988 (“WARN Act”) on behalf of a class of over 600 employees.
- Defended employer in putative class action seeking damages for alleged misclassification of independent contractors. The claims were settled for a nominal sum, significantly reducing the employer’s liability.
- Defended employer against Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”) collective action for alleged off-the-clock work of several employees.
- Defended several single plaintiff cases alleging claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), Family and Medical Leave Act “FMLA”), Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”), Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (“ADEA”), and comparable state law.
- Regularly represents employers before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”), the National Labor Relations Board (“NLRB”), the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (“OCRC”), and the State Employment Relations Board (“SERB”).

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Regularly provides counsel on the implementation of employment policies, employee handbooks, ADA compliance, discipline, investigations, leaves of absence, and terminations.
- Conducts labor and employment due diligence in a range of corporate deal structures.
- Conducts internal I-9 audits for employers.

RECOGNITION

- 2017-2021 – Selected to Ohio Super Lawyers Rising Stars list. Areas of practice: Employment & Labor; Employment & Labor: Employer.
- 2021 – Rina R. Russo received a 2021 Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® recognition for Labor and Employment Law-Management; Litigation-Labor and Employment.

RECENT ARTICLES

- Now is the Time to Revisit Your Parental Leave Policies
- A 1930s Labor Law with 21st-Century Consequences
- Department of Labor Issues New Overtime Rule
- Return of the Final Overtime Rule

PRESENTATIONS

- *Pandemic-Related ADA Accommodations for School Districts*. W|H Education Webinar, August 4, 2020
- *Getting Back to Work: COVID-19 Legal Guidance for Employers*. Walter | Haverfield Labor & Employment Webinar, May 19, 2020

ASSOCIATIONS

- Board of Trustees Member, Hitchcock Center for Women
- Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association