



Melissa Whitehead

(Advisor • Trainer • Investigator • Pre-Litigation Advocate)

Melissa Whitehead's practice primarily focuses on providing advice and counsel to employers, conducting impartial workplace investigations, and providing substantive training to employers and HR professionals. She also represents clients before administrative agencies on a wide variety of employment matters, including wrongful termination, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, wage and hour, FEHA/EEOC claims.

Melissa draws on her years of experience defending employers in litigation to provide sound, practical advice on a wide variety of issues that face employers on a daily basis – on subjects ranging from personnel decisions, navigating leaves of absences and accommodation requests, wage and hour issues – and creating policies and templates that will benefit clients on an ongoing basis. Melissa loves getting to know clients and their businesses, which enables her to provide practical and insightful guidance.

Melissa also reviews and drafts a variety of forms, policies, manuals, procedures, and guides, including employee handbooks, employment, commission, and separation agreements, performance evaluation and discipline forms/templates, and hiring/separation checklists. She also helps employers with communications to applicants and employees regarding reasonable accommodation requests and leaves of absence. Melissa enjoys partnering with clients on wage-hour compliance and other audits, and keeping employers up-to-date on legal developments.

An experienced investigator, Melissa regularly conducts impartial workplace investigations involving complex issues, including claims of sexual harassment, hostile work environment, racial discrimination, and retaliation. Melissa's expertise in this area is appreciated by public and private sector employers.

Among Melissa's other passions, she relishes training employees of all levels on topics such as EEO compliance, effectively managing accommodations, and the legal implications of COVID-19. Her humor and real-life case studies bring these subjects to life and keep participants engaged.

On the weekends you can find Melissa: Traveling as much as possible, whether it's a day trip to the beach or an international adventure, with her husband and two kids!

Education:

J.D., University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law

B.A., Westmont College

Bar Admissions:

California

Certifications, Memberships, and Awards:

Member, Association of Workplace Investigators

Association of Workplace Investigators, Certificate Holder in Investigations, CH-I

Northern California Super Lawyer Rising Star, 2016-2021

Placer County Bar Association, Women Lawyers Section, Secretary (2019 – current)