



## Melissa Whitehead

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

Melissa Whitehead is an experienced attorney whose practice is focused on providing advice and counsel to employers, conducting impartial workplace investigations, and facilitating substantive training to employees and HR professionals. She also represents clients before administrative agencies on a wide variety of workplace 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 practical guidance on a wide variety of issues that employers regularly face, including making appropriate personnel decisions, navigating leaves of absences and accommodation requests, and wage and hour challenges.

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 helps employers craft 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 frequently 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:

Named to Northern California Super Lawyers List, 2022-2023

Northern California Super Lawyer Rising Star, 2016-2021

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

AWI-CH, Association of Workplace Investigators Certificate Holder