

Lawrence M. Pearson

Lawrence M. Pearson is a Partner at Wigdor LLP. Mr. Pearson is a leading labor and employment attorney with over 20 years of experience in the field. He has represented thousands of employees and executives across the corporate spectrum in all types of employment-related legal matters, including cases involving discrimination, retaliation, sexual harassment, whistleblowing, wrongful termination, breach of contract, wage-and-hour violations, entertainment law, civil rights law and class actions.

Mr. Pearson frequently advises and counsels C-suite executives and senior employees in connection with executive compensation, severance agreements and contract negotiations. He has successfully negotiated scores of seven- and six-figure severance agreements on behalf of senior-level professionals in finance, accounting, law, technology, medicine, real estate, media and entertainment and many other fields. His trial verdicts, arbitration awards and confidential settlements total well over \$50 million dollars.

An experienced trial lawyer, Mr. Pearson concentrates his practice in the litigation of discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation and whistleblower claims. He has litigated many cases concerning wrongful termination, contracts and torts to resolution in both federal and state courts. Mr. Pearson also has conducted arbitrations through the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) and American Arbitration Association (AAA), among other forums. Mr. Pearson has represented clients from a vast assortment of industries including financial services, law, technology, media and entertainment, publishing and journalism, healthcare, hospitality, education, government, architecture and many others.

In addition to counseling employees, Mr. Pearson also is a trusted advisor to businesses and has extensive experience advising employers on dispute resolution, workplace policies and compliance, internal investigations, leaves of absence and disability accommodation, restrictive covenants, recruiting and hiring practices, and many other issues. Mr. Pearson also develops and implements employment policies, employment handbooks and agreements, and partnership and independent contractor agreements. He also conducts training seminars for management and employees on employment law compliance and avoidance of discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation in the workplace (and how to ethically respond to complaints regarding the same). Mr. Pearson has successfully defended numerous management-side clients from various employment, contract and tort claims.

Publicity

Mr. Pearson has handled numerous high-profile cases that have garnered significant media attention and been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, *New York Law Journal*, *TIME*, *Reuters*, *Bloomberg*, *Financial Times*, *Business Insider*, *New York Magazine*, *New York Post*, *New York Daily News*, *New York Business Journal*, *The Guardian*, *HuffPost*, *The Daily Beast*, *Variety*, *Gothamist*, *The Real Deal*, *Daily Mail*, *Bloomberg Law*, *The American Lawyer*, *ABA Journal*, *Above the Law* and *Law360*, among many others. He also has appeared as a commentator on legal matters on CNBC and his cases have been covered on CNN, CNBC, WABC, WNBC, WPIX and TMZ.

Mr. Pearson regularly gives presentations about employment-related subjects on educational panels and at continuing legal education (CLE) events, including presentations about employment discrimination, sexual harassment, whistleblower retaliation, executive compensation and severance agreements. He has authored numerous articles on pressing employment-related legal subjects, and his expertise has been published in the *New York Law Journal* and *Business Insider*.

Notable Cases

While the vast majority of matters litigated by Mr. Pearson on behalf of plaintiffs have resulted in confidential settlements totaling in the tens of millions of dollars, Mr. Pearson's recent notable public case outcomes include:

- \$1.34 million default judgment on behalf of a former accounts payable manager and executive assistant in a lawsuit alleging sexual harassment and retaliation against New York's so-called "Taxi King" and Taxi Club Management, Inc.;
- Won an arbitration award dismissing breach of contract and unjust enrichment claims brought by an employer who sought to claw back \$2.5 million in compensation from a former executive employee;
- \$400,000 jury verdict in favor of a former Director of Business Development / Warehouse Manager in a disability discrimination lawsuit against medical supply company Maxi-Aids, Inc. and its owner, Elliot Zaretsky;
- \$3.9 million settlement obtained on behalf of student stabbed at a Brooklyn high school, who suffered catastrophic injury;
- \$580,000 settlement agreement on behalf of a class of current and former service employees in a lawsuit alleging wage and hour violations against popular New York

City restaurant Ippudo Westside;

- Successfully argued two appeals in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of a former private wealth manager in connection with her Sarbanes-Oxley whistleblower retaliation claims regarding her termination by JPMorgan Chase & Co.; and
- Many multi-million-dollar settlements on behalf of professionals, partners, and executives in the consulting, financial services, and accounting industries (among others) regarding claims of sexual harassment and assault, race and gender discrimination and retaliation.

Experience and Types of Cases

Mr. Pearson has been involved in the litigation of many complex and high-profile matters involving discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, LGBTQ+ status, disability and national origin, as well as cases involving retaliation, sexual harassment, whistleblower complaints, wrongful termination, breach of contract, wage and hour violations, contract violations, defamation, torts, civil rights violations and class actions.

Before joining the Firm, Mr. Pearson was an attorney at Jackson Lewis LLP, where he counseled and represented employers in labor and employment matters, as well as at Morgan Lewis LLP, where he was an associate in the Labor & Employment Practice Group.

Mr. Pearson's recent representative cases include:

- Numerous settlement agreements on behalf of junior-level, mid-level and senior-level financial services professionals in connection with sexual harassment, unequal pay, discrimination on the basis of gender, pregnancy, race, national origin and disability, retaliation, breach of contract and/or whistleblower claims against global Wall Street and Fortune 500 firms;
- Successful representation of numerous doctors, surgeons and nurses in individual matters including disability, race and gender discrimination, FMLA violations, whistleblower retaliation, and breach of contract claims;
- Successful representation of numerous attorneys in individual matters involving sexual harassment, unequal pay, whistleblower retaliation and discrimination (including wrongful termination) based upon gender, race, pregnancy, LGBT status or disability;
- Successful representation of a portfolio manager in an age and disability discrimination lawsuit against a large bank;
- Successful representation of a female senior-level employee in a gender/pregnancy

- discrimination action against a large advertising company;
- Multiple settlement agreements in individual and class-action wage and hour lawsuits against prominent New York City restaurants and other companies;
 - Successful representation of multiple female employees of color in connection with claims of race discrimination against a well-known pharmaceutical company;
 - Successful representation of a group of female physicians in connection with claims of systemic gender discrimination and unequal pay against a New York metro area hospital;
 - Successful representation of a recruiting director in a race and disability discrimination and retaliation matter against a global accounting firm;
 - Successful representation of a marketing director in a race, religion and national origin discrimination lawsuit against a national health insurance company;
 - Successful representation of a female dermatologist in connection with claims of pregnancy discrimination and parental status discrimination against a clinical laboratory;
 - Successful representation of a female employee in connection with claims of race, ethnicity and national origin discrimination against an international credit rating agency;
 - Successful representation of a drug development expert in a breach of contract and whistleblower retaliation lawsuit against a biopharmaceutical company;
 - Successful representation of a senior-level financial manager in a race and national origin discrimination and whistleblower retaliation action against an international conglomerate;
 - Successful representation of a female marketing executive in a gender discrimination and retaliation lawsuit against a start-up travel industry company;
 - Successful representation of a female interior designer in connection with claims of pregnancy discrimination and retaliation against a New York City-based interior design firm;
 - Successful representation of a human resources director in a sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation matter against a global advertising company;
 - Successful representation of a general manager in a pregnancy discrimination lawsuit against a well-known global restaurant brand;
 - Successful representation of a senior-level female employee in a sexual harassment and retaliation matter against a large real estate firm;
 - Successful representation of a hairstylist in a sexual harassment and retaliation matter against a well-known hair salon;
 - Successful representation of a female journalist in a lawsuit alleging race, gender and national origin discrimination and retaliation against a well-known media company;
 - Successful representation of plaintiff in a lawsuit alleging discrimination and breach

- of contract against a large wholesale clothing company;
- Successful representation of a female manager in a pregnancy discrimination case against an international beverage company;
 - Successful representation of a female security guard in a sexual harassment and retaliation lawsuit against a large security services firm;
 - Successful representation of a senior-level employee in an age discrimination case against a global consulting firm;
 - Successful representation of a senior-level employee in a wrongful termination lawsuit against a well-known electronics company; and
 - Successful resolution of a wage and hour class action lawsuit against a limousine company.

Awards

Mr. Pearson has been recognized by Best Lawyers, widely regarded as a top peer review service, as a leading attorney in the area of Labor and Employment Litigation for the past three years. He has also been selected to the Super Lawyers list for seven years in a row. In addition, Mr. Pearson has received a 10.0 “Superb” Rating from Avvo and was named to the Lawdragon Leading Plaintiff Employment Lawyers list in 2019 and 2020.

Education

Mr. Pearson received his Juris Doctor from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where he was Book Review Editor of the Journal of Labor and Employment Law and received a Public Service Award for his work with the Philadelphia Unemployment Project. He graduated with a B.A. in Political Science, cum laude, from The George Washington University, where he was also a member of the Honors Program, minored in Philosophy and received a merit scholarship.

Admitted to Practice

Mr. Pearson is admitted to practice in the New York State courts, and in the U.S. District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York, as well as the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.