



## **Doing the Work I Love – Without the Stuff I Don't**

**Joe Brown | Special Counsel**

**I enjoyed my time at big firms but not everything that came with it.**

I started my legal career at a big DC firm doing a mix of commercial and employment litigation. I really liked the kinds of cases I worked on and the chance to collaborate with great lawyers. But I found that the administrative and business development responsibilities – especially at the partner level – weren't things I enjoyed. After relocating to Buffalo to be closer to family, I worked at several large and mid-sized firms, but those same obligations followed.

**This position lets me focus on the parts of the job I enjoy.**

What I enjoyed about big firms was the interesting legal work, the resources, and the smart colleagues. I still get all of that here – but with a lot more flexibility. I don't have to commute, I haven't had to travel for an assignment yet, and I'm still able to tap into the firm's full range of resources and support. And I can pick up the phone (or jump on a video conference) and have access to subject matter experts on any employment and labor question. The firm is also at the cutting-edge of utilizing technology that allows me to easily access the firm's collective knowledge on just about any topic in labor and employment law that one could imagine.

**The work is interesting and it's not "cookie-cutter."**

I handle everything from demand letters and administrative charges to high-stakes mediations and complex litigation. Most of my work is discrimination, harassment complaints, whistleblower claims, breach of contract cases, and class actions. I work with two big PEOs and represent insurance carriers and their clients. The assignments are varied and engaging – it's not just the same thing over and over.

## **I can manage my workload in a way that fits my life.**

All the assignments go through the Virtual Office, which makes it easy to organize my workflow. Every couple of weeks, we get an email asking about availability. That really helps balance the job with other responsibilities and scale up or down as needed.

## **Even though it's virtual, I still feel connected to the team.**

I've built relationships through the Firm's regional retreat and now I'm coordinating a "team pod" for a smaller group of virtual team members to get to know one another and share experiences. It doesn't feel isolating – there's a real sense of being part of something bigger, even while working remotely.

## **Outside of work, I advocate for people with autism.**

My youngest son was diagnosed with autism when he was age two. Since then, my family's been very active supporting the Summit Center, which is where he received services for pre-kindergarten. I've been involved in promoting autism awareness and acceptance and currently serve as president of Summit's foundation board. The flexibility of this role allows me to stay committed to that work without compromising my legal career.

## **I'm Bills Mafia.**

I actually grew up a Cowboys fan in New York thanks to the influence of an older cousin. But after moving back to Buffalo and growing frustrated with the Cowboys for decades, I have been all in on the Bills for several years. While all cities love to support their home teams, our sense of oneness with the team is just different and extends far beyond the images of fans jumping through tables at tailgates.

## ***Meet Joe Brown***

