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2026 ABA LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOURCE PAGE

Fisher Phillips is proud to serve as a Silver Sponsor of the American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law's 20th Annual Labor and Employment Law Conference.

Fisher Phillips at the Conference

Best Practices for Mediating Employment Disputes

Thursday, November 5, 2026
2:30–3:45 p.m.

Fisher Phillips partner [Emily N. Litzinger](#) is a panelist for this session, exploring practical strategies for making employment mediation more effective.

Using a series of hypotheticals, the panelists will discuss how to determine the right time for mediation, select an effective mediator, and prepare counsel and clients for the settlement process. The program will also cover strategies for mediation day, including setting a constructive tone, managing expectations, evaluating opening offers, using brackets and mediator's proposals, and addressing challenges that may arise when finalizing settlement agreements.

Panelists:

Key Contacts

[J. Randall Coffey](#)

[Emily Litzinger](#)

[Joshua D. Nadreau](#)

[Barbara Jean D'Aquila](#)

[Jamie J. Spataro](#)

[Lonnie D. Giamela](#)

- Hon. J. Mark Coulson, U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland
- Mark Hanna, Murphy Anderson PLLC
- **Emily N. Litzinger, Fisher Phillips**
- Nefertari “Nef” Rigsby, Kaplan North America

Preparing for a More Effective Employment Mediation

Successful mediation requires more than showing up at the negotiating table. The timing, preparation, participants, and negotiation strategy can all influence whether the process leads to a practical resolution.

Fisher Phillips helps employers prepare for and navigate employment mediation by:

- Evaluating the strengths, risks, and potential costs of a dispute
- Determining when mediation may be most productive
- Selecting the right mediator for the matter
- Preparing company representatives and other decision-makers
- Developing negotiation strategies and managing expectations
- Structuring and finalizing clear, enforceable settlement agreements

Our attorneys approach mediation with both the legal issues and the organization’s broader business priorities in mind. When an early resolution is not possible, our litigation team is prepared to defend employers through arbitration, trial, and appeal.

Additional Resources for Employers

Explore Fisher Phillips resources addressing several of the workplace issues featured throughout the 2026 conference:

- [Labor Relations Activity Maps](#)
- [Wage and Hour Maps](#)
- [Pay Equity and Transparency Map](#)
- [AI Governance Hub](#)
- [Employers' Rapid Response Team for DHS Raids](#)
- [FAQs For Employers About OSHA](#)
- [Reputation and Crisis Management](#)

How We Can Help

Workplace disputes can disrupt operations, strain employee relationships, and create significant legal and financial exposure. Fisher Phillips helps employers manage these challenges at every stage—from preventing a dispute to resolving it efficiently or defending the organization in court.

Prevent Disputes

We help employers address workplace concerns before they escalate by providing practical counseling, reviewing policies and employment practices, conducting workplace investigations, delivering management training, and identifying potential areas of risk.

Evaluate the Best Path Forward

When a dispute arises, we work with clients to assess the facts, legal exposure, business priorities, and potential costs. This allows employers to make informed decisions about early resolution, mediation, arbitration, litigation, or another appropriate strategy.

Navigate Mediation and Settlement

Our attorneys help clients prepare for mediation, select mediators, develop negotiation strategies, manage expectations, and evaluate proposed resolutions. We also structure and finalize settlement agreements designed to provide clarity and reduce the risk of future disputes.

Defend Employers in Litigation

When resolution is not possible, Fisher Phillips represents employers in administrative proceedings, arbitration, litigation, trial, and appeal. Our experience includes discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wage and hour, labor relations, accommodation, and other workplace claims.

Align Legal Strategy With Business Goals

Every dispute affects more than the legal department. We develop strategies that account for operational priorities, employee relations, reputation, cost, and the organization's long-term objectives.

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