

PETTIT KOHN

PETTIT KOHN INGRASSIA LUTZ & DOLIN

STEVEN J. DAWSON, ESQ.

Senior Counsel



Steven J. Dawson is a senior attorney in the Los Angeles office and a zealous advocate for clients. He regularly defends companies and individuals in all types of employment disputes, including pre-filing negotiations, mediations, private arbitrations, and litigation, appeals and writs before state and federal courts and government agencies. With over three decades of experience as a trial lawyer, law firm partner, city prosecutor, and volunteer judge pro tempore, Steve has established himself as a well-respected figure in the legal community. Steve is exceptionally responsive, strategic and client focused, and effectively applies his legal and business perspectives when resolving disputes, having previously practiced as an in-house corporate attorney and at several established law firms.

Steve assists employers navigate, avoid and defend some of their most complex and high-profile legal challenges, including claims of misclassification, whistleblowing, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. He has extensive experience with PAGA, Title VII, ADA, ADEA, FLSA, FMLA, CFRA, FEHA, and similar regulations and statutes. Steve also has experience drafting and enforcing binding arbitration agreements containing class action waivers, and counseling clients regarding wage and hour compliance, employee relations, investigations, discipline, demotions and terminations, disability accommodation obligations and leaves of absence, workplace privacy concerns, and disputes concerning independent contractor agreements, severance and separation agreements, and restrictive covenants, trade secrets and non-solicitation contracts. Steve has personally handled more than 20 single-claimant binding employment arbitrations before JAMS and the American Arbitration Association as the lead attorney in several states.

Steve obtained his undergraduate bachelor's degree from Stanford University, where he was a member of the varsity track team (hurdles) and a congressional intern with the U.S. House of Representatives. Steve received his law degree from the University of California, College of the Law, San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings), where he externed clerked for the California Supreme Court. Beginning as an associate attorney and later promoted to equity partner, Steve spent 16 years with a municipal firm in downtown Los Angeles, where he gained invaluable jury trial experience. He then practiced for 12 years as an in-house corporate attorney with a multi-billion dollar diversified financial services company with more than 14,000 employees, where he advised upper management in 21 states on day-to-day human resource matters while managing corporate litigation matters involving intellectual property, transportation, commercial, real property, and labor and employment issues.

Steve has represented a diverse private-sector client base in myriad industries, including hospitality, manufacturing, retail, wholesale, staffing, aeronautics, healthcare, real estate, agriculture, higher education, and financial services. Steve has also represented numerous public agencies, such as the cities of El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Santa Clarita, Carson and Alhambra, along with their city managers and department heads. Steve's clients have enjoyed the benefit of his stellar record of success in efficiently handling and resolving their employment and business disputes.

EDUCATION

- University of California, College of Law, San Francisco (J.D., 1986)
- Stanford University (B.A., 1982)

PRACTICE AREAS

- Employment & Labor

AFFILIATIONS

- Admitted, State Bar of California
- Admitted, all United States District Courts in California
- The National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA)
- Former member, the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC)
- Former member, the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles (CAALA)