



Matthew M. Sonne

Associate

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PRACTICE AREAS

- International Practice
- Labor and Employment

OVERVIEW

Matthew Sonne is an associate in the Labor and Employment Practice Group in the firm's Orange County office. He is fluent in Spanish, and frequently advises employers on Spanish-speaking workforce issues in addition to the below areas of expertise.

Areas of Practice

Mr. Sonne specializes in labor and employment law representing employers. He litigates in multiple areas of employment law and defends against individual and class action lawsuits alleging violations of wage and hour laws, discrimination, wrongful termination, harassment, breach of contract, labor code section 132a claims, and other related matters. Mr. Sonne represents employers in state and federal courts, as well as before the DLSE, EDD, and other administrative bodies. He also advises employers on handbook preparation, employment contracts and applications, and personnel policies. Mr. Sonne also has experience with the National Labor Relations Board and has represented employers in related investigations. He also has experience in civil appeal practice, including briefing and oral argument before the California Court of Appeal and briefing to the California Supreme Court.

Prior to attending law school, Mr. Sonne worked in the White House as a writer, and also was a member of the Clinton-Bush Transition Team in 2000. He also worked in the Antitrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

While attending the University of Virginia Law School, Mr. Sonne was a member of the Virginia Journal of International Law and also taught undergraduate Spanish at the university. He also participated in clinical work for the Charlottesville Public Defender's office and successfully defended criminal cases in general district court. Mr. Sonne was elected president of the Rex E. Lee Law Society.

(For more information about Mr. Sonne's experience, including his published articles, court decisions, and speeches, please click on the appropriate boxes above).

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Virginia, 2005
- B.A., Claremont McKenna College, 2000, *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa

ADMISSIONS

- California
- U.S. District Court for the Northern, Central, and Southern Districts of California

- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

LANGUAGES

- Spanish

EXPERIENCE**Published Decisions**

Corder v. Houston's Restaurants, Inc., 424 F. Supp. 2d 1205 (C.D. Cal. 2006) (held meal and rest periods violations were penalties subject to a one-year, rather than a four-year, statute of limitations).

Recent Victories

Successfully defended a national clothing retailer in a jury trial before Orange County Superior Court. The Plaintiff alleged wrongful termination and retaliation in violation of public policy. Won a complete defense verdict.

Achieved what may be the first trial court ruling in California enforcing a class action waiver after the California Supreme Court's *Gentry* decision made such waivers difficult to enforce.

Defeated class certification for a retail service company on all counts in a wage and hour class action before the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

HONORS

- Southern California Rising Star, *Super Lawyers*, 2009, 2010 and 2011

MEMBERSHIPS

- Member, Orange County Bar Association, Labor and Employment Section
- Member, American Bar Association

ARTICLES

- Mr. Sonne is a member of the Editorial Board of the California Labor & Employment Alert (Castle Publications Ltd.)
- Quoted in "Defense Wants More Class-y PAGA Suits," *The Recorder* (August 15, 2007).

Labor & Employment Law Blog Articles

- "Title VII's Anti-Retaliation Provisions Protect Employee's Answers To Sexual Harassment Investigator's Questions", February 3, 2009
- "Case Reminds California Employers That Handbook Language Cannot Compensate For A Missing Signature On An Employment Arbitration Agreement, December 21, 2007
- "Ninth Circuit Recognizes Claim for Reverse Religious Discrimination and Highlights Pitfall of 'Consensus of Management' Employment Actions, May 30, 2007

HISPANIC/LATINO NEWSLETTER

- Enfoque Latino - Fall 2006

SPEECHES

- Mr. Sonne was the keynote speaker on "Case Law Updates" at the Employers Group's Workplace and Employment Law Update in Orange County.
- Mr. Sonne lectured managers and owners in the food service/restaurant industry in a presentation entitled "Wage & Hour Crisis In The Food Service Industry."
- Mr. Sonne was a presenter at a recent "Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer" series.
- Mr. Sonne delivered a lecture in Spanish to managers at a major construction and design firm in southern California entitled "How to Prevent Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation in the Workplace."
- Mr. Sonne lectures for Castle Publications, Ltd. on Wage and Hour Laws.
- Mr. Sonne has presented lectures for employer's organizations such as Professionals in Human Resources Association (PIHRA).
- Mr. Sonne frequently conducts seminars in sexual harassment prevention/training to supervisors and employees, in both English and Spanish. He also lectures at corporate retreats and annual meetings on employment law issues.

EVENTS

- BRACE Program Quarterly Event
- 2012 Wage and Hour Laws - San Francisco, Orange County, Pasadena and Los Angeles
- Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - Orange County
- The Aftermath of AT&T Mobility v. Concepcion
- Labor & Employment Law Update & Happy Hour - Orange County
- 2011 Wage and Hour Laws - San Francisco, Orange County, Pasadena and Los Angeles
- Labor & Employment Law Update & Happy Hour - Orange County
- 2010 Wage and Hour Laws Series - Los Angeles, Orange County, San Francisco and Pasadena
- Labor and Employment Law: Mid-Year Update 2009 - Costa Mesa
- 2009 Wage and Hour Laws Series - Los Angeles, Orange County, San Francisco and Pasadena
- New Labor & Employment Laws for 2009 - Orange County
- Labor and Employment Law: Mid-Year Update 2008 - Orange County
- Breakfast With Your Labor Lawyer - Orange County