Alison F. Reif

HEAD OF EMPLOYMENT

617-248-5157 areif@choate.com

Alison Reif, Head of Choate's Employment practice, provides practical and efficient business-oriented counseling and advice on managing all aspects of a company's relationship with its employees. This includes providing counsel on hiring and employment agreements, terminations and RIFs, disability and leave issues, wage and hour compliance and audits, discrimination and harassment investigations, employment and severance agreements, employee handbooks and policies, non-competition, and other post-employment restrictions, independent contractor arrangements, employee classifications, and virtually all other issues facing modern employers.

A seasoned negotiator, Alison specializes in finding workable, real world solutions to accomplish business objectives, avoid legal liability, and remain consistent with a company's culture. She has a nationwide practice, with a sweet spot of mid-sized companies. Alison is routinely called on to advise international companies, particularly in the United Kingdom and Canada, who are starting operations in the United States and require assistance in navigating local employment laws. Alison has also successfully represented companies in more than fifty lawsuits brought by their employees, involving a wide variety of claims.

Alison also regularly represents management teams and private equity firms in connection with employment-related aspects of transactions, including executive employment agreements, restrictive covenants, equity agreements, due diligence and purchase agreements.

Focus Areas

Litigation and Investigations

Business and Financial Litigation

Recognition

- *Best Lawyers in America* (2015-2025)
- *Chambers USA* (2019-2026)
- *Massachusetts Super Lawyers*
- *The Legal 500* (2021-2026)

Representative Engagements

- Represented AI consulting firm in the sale to a PE-backed strategic investor.
- Successfully counseled large and small employers through complex situations involving employee disability and leave issues, employment aspects of mergers and acquisitions, violations of non-competition agreements, and discrimination and harassment allegations.
- Conducted multiple external investigations for Fortune 500 and smaller companies into allegations of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.
- Negotiated multiple complex employment agreements and separation agreements on behalf of

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executives and employers.

- Represented management teams in connection with employment agreements, restrictive covenants and equity agreements in private equity transactions.
- Handled employment aspects of hundreds of middle market private equity transactions, on both buy and sell side.
- Prevailed at summary judgment and at the Massachusetts Appeals Court in obtaining full dismissal of wrongful termination and other claims.
- Provided training to client's management team on compliance with various employment laws, including harassment, discrimination, and leave laws.
- Drafted employee handbooks and employment agreements for compliance across multiple states.
- Successfully represented departing executive and new company in litigation over noncompetition agreement.
- Conducted external audits of companies for compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and Equal Pay Acts.
- Successfully represented large national company in Department of Labor audit regarding employee classifications, resulting in full dismissal of charges.
- Represented large medical products manufacturer in complex federal court litigation involving "whistleblower" claim.
- Obtained full defense verdict in trial before the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination of sexual harassment and retaliation claims.
- Represented major insurance company in arbitration over change-in-control severance benefits.

Publications and Presentations

- "Diversity and Harassment in the Workplace: Current Trends and Best Practices," presenter, Boston Private Venture and Private Equity Conference, June 2018
- "Key Employment Law Principles for Companies Entering the U.S.," presenter, Travers Smith London Seminar
- "Navigating Non-Compete Agreements: a Board Primer," moderator, Stybel Peabody & Associates' Seat at the Table
- "Severance Agreements and Considerations," presenter
- "Massachusetts CORI Reform and Personnel File Law Update," presenter, Hospitality, Financial and Technology Professionals Association Cape Cod Meeting
- "Best Practices for a Reduction in Force: A Basic Checklist," co-author, *Employee Relations Law Journal*
- "Massachusetts Legislation Requires Implementation of Electronic Data Protection Policies and Procedures," panelist, Duff & Phelps Panel Discussion
- "Employment Law for U.S. Startups," presenter, Swiss House for Advanced Research and Education Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- "New Guidance Issued on ADA's Association Provision," author, *Boston Business Journal*
- "An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure: Preventing Employee Theft and Fraud," co-author, *Massachusetts Bar Association Section Review*

Professional & Community Involvement

- Member, Massachusetts Bar Association Labor and Employment Sections
- Member, Boston Bar Association
- Member, Board of Directors for Revels, Inc.
- Past Member, Board of Directors for Greater Boston Legal Services

- Member, Choate's Pro Bono Committee
- Past Member, Choate's Executive Committee
- Past Member, Choate's Hiring Committee

Education & Credentials

- Stanford Law School, JD (1997)
- Oberlin College, BA (1993) *magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa*

Admissions

- Massachusetts
- District of Massachusetts
- U.S. Supreme Court