



Melanie C. Walker

Shareholder

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Melanie Walker assists clients throughout the world with their business- and family-based temporary and permanent immigration status needs, with a significant portion of her practice focused on transferring key team members to the United States for global organizations.

As a shareholder in the Firm's Global Immigration Group, Ms. Walker provides strategic guidance and immigration counseling services to companies and their employees. These services include business immigration through investment and trade (E-1/E-2); labor certifications/PERM (including Special Handling and Supervised Recruitment cases); non-immigrant and permanent resident petitions for religious workers (R-1/I-360); Blanket L and individual international transferee programs (L-1), including new office L-1 petitions; specialty occupations (H-1B, TN, E-3) and multinational manager petitions (EB-1); naturalization applications; immigrant and non-immigrant visa processing; and other consular representations, including expedited processing through consular posts and USCIS. She has successfully challenged specialty occupation denials in federal court. Ms. Walker's work with individual clients includes not only employment-related filings, but numerous petitions for family-based immigration benefits through marriage or adoption, including experience in obtaining permanent residency for qualified individuals under provisions of VAWA and as victims of criminal activity through the U-visa classification. She has advocated on behalf of her clients to achieve resolution on unduly lengthy filings, including interacting with governmental liaisons and, in some cases, pursuing mandamus actions.

Ms. Walker is a skilled EB-5 immigration lawyer who has dedicated a significant portion of her practice to representing investors, working in collaboration with client representatives domestically and overseas to prepare clear and comprehensive funding documentation to overcome complex USCIS requests for evidence challenging both project-related and individual source of funds aspects of filings originated by others. She has a wide foundation of diverse I-526 and I-829 filing experience.

Prior to joining Baker Donelson, Ms. Walker was a law clerk to Chief Judge Curtis L. Collier in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. During her clerkship, she provided extensive research and drafting support on decisions resolving various federal and state employment claims under FMLA, FLSA, ERISA, Title VII, Title VI, and THRA. Ms. Walker worked as an immigration paralegal before attending law school and cultivated considerable experience in serving clients with their employment and family immigration issues during her years in this position.



Professional Honors & Activities

- Recipient – Baker Donelson Chattanooga Pro Bono Award (2019)
- Recognized as a "Top Author" on Immigration in the 2017 edition of JD Supra's Readers' Choice Awards
- Recognized as the 2015 Firm Associate of the Year
- Member – American Bar Association
- Member – Georgia Bar Association
- Member – Tennessee Bar Association
- Member – American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Board Member – La Paz Chattanooga



Publications

- "USCIS Reminders: Increased Filing Fees, Additional Asylum Program Fee, and Extended Premium Processing Times" (April 2024)
- "Filing Fee Increases and H-1B CAP Season Are Approaching – Time to Plan Ahead and Budget Accordingly! " (February 2024)
- "Summer Travelers Take Note: Nonimmigrant Visa Fees Increasing on June 17" (May 2023)
- "More Good News for Permanent Residents: Mail Delivery Process for ADIT STAMP Available" (March 2023)
- "H-1B CAP Alert – Key Dates for this Year's H-1B Registration Process" (January 2023)
- "Some Big Changes for USCIS this Week: Premium Processing Expanded, Extended Receipts for Permanent Residents, some Relief for H and L Family Members, and More "Flexibility" for Responses" (January 2023)
- "Travelers From China: COVID-19 Testing Requirement Returns and Consular Posts Close " (December 2022)
- "Home for the Holidays" (November 2022)
- "Impact of Equal Pay Transparency Laws on PERM Recruitment Practices," republished December 6, 2022, in SHRM (November 2022)
- "No More Paper I-94W: ESTA Now Required for VWP Travelers by Land" (April 2022)
- "H-1B Cap Alert – Key Dates For This Year's H-1B Registration Process" (January 2022)
- "New Proclamation Suspends New H, L, and J Visas and Extends Immigrant Visa Suspension Through December," *Westlaw* (July 2020)
- "Updated: Trump Amends Proclamation to Expand Scope of Restrictions on Nonimmigrant Visas" (Originally Published June 23, 2020; Last Updated June 30, 2020)
- "Scary Rumors: H, L, and J Nonimmigrants Should Stay in or Quickly Come to USA" (June 2020)
- "H-1B Registration and FY21 – Planning Starts Now" (September 2019)
- Contributing Author – "Immigration Practice," *Juris Publishing*, Fifteenth edition (2014)



Speaking Engagements

- Co-presenter – "Cultivating a Global Workforce: Immigration Options and Hiring Considerations," The Workforce Development Provider Training Series (November 2022)
- Co-presenter – "Immigration Employment Options and Hiring Considerations," Wilson Works Industry Council (August 2022)
- Panelist – "Immigration Law, What Multinational Employers Need to Know Now," German American Chamber of Commerce webinar (October 2020)
- Panelist – "Let My People Come," Baker Donelson webinar (September 30, 2020)
- Panelist – "International Forum: Options for Students After Graduation," Lee University, Diversity Council (April 2012)



Webinars

- Immigration Law: What Multinational Employers Need to Know Now (October 2020)
- Let My People Come! (September 2020)



Education

- University of Georgia School of Law, J.D., 2009, magna cum laude
 - Order of the Coif
- Roosevelt University, B.F.A. in Acting, 1994



Admissions

- Tennessee, 2011
- Georgia, 2009
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia