



## Chaitra Gowda

Shareholder

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As a shareholder in the Firm's Labor & Employment Group, Chaitra Gowda represents clients before state and federal courts, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, and several other tribunals, advising and defending clients on all aspects of employment and compliance issues.

Chaitra Gowda, a member of the Firm's Labor & Employment Group, primarily focuses her practice in employment defense litigation as well as internal investigations. Her litigation experience includes assisting in the defense against claims of discrimination, retaliation, whistleblower actions, wrongful termination, breach of contract, non-compete and non-solicit claims, and wage and hour allegations as well as state and federal investigations related to the same. She also advises educational institution clients on Title IX compliance and participates in all aspects of Title IX investigations.

Ms. Gowda works closely with employers of all industries and sizes to provide practical advice to clients facing challenging workforce issues involving discipline, leave issues, contract violations, restrictive covenants, terminations, reductions in force, and layoffs. She provides training to managers, supervisors, compliance officers, and general counsel on preventative litigation practices, focusing on how to comply with applicable law and regulations, avoid workplace disputes, and resolve employee concerns. In addition to providing training, Ms. Gowda assists in crisis management responses, handles state and federal agency investigations as well as internal and government investigations involving all types of employment issues.

Within this practice, Ms. Gowda has a particular interest in working with health care clients who employ and train residents who are seen as both students and employees with a distinct set of rights. Given this interest, she has developed a niche working specifically with Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs to assist with the various employment and academic issues that arise among students, residents, fellows, and researchers. She works with GME programs to develop ACGME-compliance academic policies and procedures and has advised program leadership through complex disciplinary and dismissal actions. Her experience extends to creating Title IX policies and programs for stand-alone academic medical programs and leading clients through Title IX proceedings related to gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.

Beyond academic medical programs, Ms. Gowda also advises education institution clients with their Title IX proceedings at all levels. Ms. Gowda has served as an investigator as well as a hearing advisor in several Title IX proceedings.

Prior to private practice, Ms. Gowda served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Mark W. Crooks of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County for two years. While in law school, she was a member of the Business Law Program, practiced as a Rule 16 Attorney at the University of Maryland School of Law's Summer Legal Clinic, and clerked for a boutique law firm in Annapolis, Maryland.

### Representative Matters

- Vice chaired a large health care system and several of its affiliates in a state whistleblower retaliation lawsuit filed by a former employee. Ultimately, awarded a full defense verdict in the clients' favor.



- Defended a large construction company in a wage and hour class action. Reached a favorable settlement for the client on the eve of trial.
- Participated in several Title IX proceedings as an investigator as well as hearing advisor.
- Successfully obtained a reversal of a DOL audit that claimed an educational institution misidentified, and therefore unlawfully compensated, several independent contractors.
- Successfully obtained a voluntary dismissal of a former executive's lawsuit for breach of contract after termination against a health care system after filing a motion to dismiss.
- Successfully obtained injunctive and protective orders prohibiting governments from restricting the business operations of over a dozen long-term health care facilities pursuant to new regulation.
- Represented a federal contractor serving government agencies during a DOL investigation, achieving a favorable resolution for the client.
- Represented a national financial entity in several breach of contract lawsuits, including non-compete, non-solicit and non-disclosure claims.
- Represented a national medical diagnostic laboratory in federal investigations as well as state and federal lawsuits filed by former affiliates.
- Successfully obtained a remand on a Medicare appeals in federal court after prevailing on a motion to dismiss filed by the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Successfully obtained a multi-million-dollar bond against judgment debtors in Maryland state court.
- Successfully obtained judgments in favor of clients in detinue and replevin actions in Maryland state court.
- Represented a client in a breach of contract filed by a contractor. Conducted initial motions practice and significant discovery before the matter was resolved during mediation.
- Assisted in the removal of a personal representative for mismanaging estate property and failing to comply with fiduciary duties in her management of the estate.
- Assisted in a favorable settlement for clients in a complex estate and trust matter involving Pennsylvania and California state courts in a case of first impression legal issue.



## Professional Honors & Activities

- Selected to Rising Stars by Maryland Super Lawyers in Employment Litigation: Defense (2023 – 2024)
- Member – Maryland State Bar Association
- Member – Baltimore City Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division (YLD)
- Member – Anne Arundel Bar Association
- Member – American Bar Association (ABA)
- Member – ABA's Labor and Employment Law Section's Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
- Member – Baltimore County Bar Association
- Member – Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Maryland
- Mentor – Maryland Carey Law Alumni Mentor Program
- Graduate – ABA Section of Labor and Employment Law's 2023 Leadership Development Program (LDP)
- Graduate – Business Volunteers Maryland 2023 GIVE Fellow



## Publications

- "Tax-Exempt Private Schools Treated Equally to Federally Funded Schools, Subject to Title IX Requirements" (July 2022)



## Education

- University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, J.D., 2016
  - Articles Editor – *Journal of Business & Technology Law*



- Michigan State University, B.S., 2011



## Admissions

- Maryland, 2016
- U.S. District Court, District of Maryland
- U.S. Bankruptcy Court, District of Maryland
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit