

Emery Gullickson Richards |
Associate
Labor & Employment

717 Texas Avenue
Houston, TX 77002
+1.713.632.8679
erichards@blankrome.com



Emery Richards is a litigation associate with a focus on employment, trade secret, and commercial matters. Emery has experience representing businesses in the energy, maritime, manufacturing, chemical, software, real estate, healthcare, professional sports, staffing, pharmaceutical, and food and beverage industries, as well as governmental entities and officials. She has participated in all aspects of litigation, including trial, motions practice, discovery, and appeal.

Emery routinely counsels organizations on employment law compliance, provides guidance to entities evaluating labor and employment aspects of business transactions, and conducts internal investigations and training programs in the workplace. Emery litigates and advises clients on all aspects of employment and trade secret law, including:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Family and Medical Leave Act
- Fair Labor Standards Act
- Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act
- Texas Worker's Compensation Act
- Texas Commission on Human Rights Act
- Texas Payday Law
- Chapter 21 of the Texas Labor Code
- Texas Uniform Trade Secrets Act
- Defend Trade Secrets Act
- Occupational Safety and Health Act
- Computer Fraud and Abuse Act

Emery regularly works on a variety of general civil litigation matters involving causes of action for breach of contract, fraud, negligence, and nuisance, in addition to jurisdictional challenges, among others. These disputes include controversies related to commercial agreements, trade secret misappropriation, bankruptcy, chemical exposure, environmental contamination, workplace injuries and fatalities, maritime contracts, shipping disputes, and other contested issues. She has experience with proceedings in state and federal court at both the trial and appellate level, as well as before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

During law school, she spent a year as a visiting student at the University of Houston Law Center and served as a field reports editor for the *Columbia Journal of Environmental Law*. Emery is fluent in Spanish.

Outside The Firm

Emery is a co-chair of the Houston Bar Association's Gender Fairness Committee and a member of the Houston Young Lawyers Association. As part of her commitment to pro bono service, she provides employment counsel to Houston's largest direct services provider to the homeless community. Emery and her spouse, Neal, have two children.

Select Engagements

- Defended a *Fortune* 500 company in an employee termination case alleging race discrimination and retaliation that resulted in an arbitration award finding in favor of the employer on all alleged theories.
- Defended a *Fortune* 100 telecommunications company, serving as sole trial counsel in a bench trial that resulted in a take-nothing judgment on breach of contract and all other claims.
- Defended a governmental entity in a grievance action brought by an employee suspended for misconduct, resulting in an arbitration award fully upholding the disciplinary suspension imposed.
- Defended various organizations against claims of discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, disability, and religion by former employees.
- Conducted internal investigations regarding sexual harassment claims on behalf of private sector and public sector employers.
- Helped obtain a favorable settlement of a worker's compensation retaliation claim for a company in the security industry.
- Drafted motion in contempt proceedings that resulted in judicial finding that manufacturing company had violated injunction prohibiting possession of competitor's confidential information.
- Advised high-level employees on reporting obligations and other sensitive issues in the workplace.
- Helped obtain dismissal of Toxic Substances Control Act claims brought against a major chemical company through supplemental briefing regarding the plaintiffs' lack of Article III standing.

- Helped develop and conduct training on workplace disability accommodation for a municipality.
- Represented a manufacturing company in prosecuting non-compete agreements with former employees.
- Defended a major healthcare system in a class action alleging a conspiracy to suppress employee wages.
- Represented a large municipality in litigation alleging antitrust and equal protection claims brought by an adult entertainment business.
- Member of the trial team that defended a high-ranking municipal official in a three-week trial regarding the denial of a petition to repeal by referendum the city's equal rights ordinance which extended protections to the transgender community; the judge found the petition invalid after the jury returned a verdict finding forgery and false oaths throughout the petition.

Admissions

- U.S. District Court - Northern District of Texas
- Texas
- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court - Western District of Texas
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Memberships

- Houston Bar Association

Education

- Rice University, BA, cum laude
- Columbia Law School, JD