

Howard M. Knee | Partner

Labor & Employment

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Howard Knee is a partner in Blank Rome's Los Angeles office. He has more than 40 years of experience representing employers in all aspects of labor and employment matters in both the public and private sectors. Howard has a broad range of federal and state trial and appellate court experience. He has represented employers in jury trials involving employment discrimination, wrongful termination, race and sex harassment, wage and hour claims, defamation, and unfair competition. He also has significant experience in class actions and representative actions, including those involving the Private Attorney General Act ("PAGA"). Howard has handled cases before the United States and California Supreme Courts as well as the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and state appellate courts. Howard also advises employers on employment matters in connection with the sale and purchase of public and private companies, including issues related to the Cal-WARN and WARN Acts.

Howard also has significant experience handling matters before the National Labor Relations Board. His experience includes representing management in union organizing campaigns, negotiating collective bargaining agreements, responding to and litigating unfair labor practice charges, and handling grievances and arbitrations.

As a student at UCLA Law School, Howard was an intern at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a Ford Foundation Fellow at the Center for Law and Social Policy in Washington, D.C., the country's first public interest law firm. After law school, he returned to Washington, D.C., where he worked first in the Ralph Nader organization and then served as a Legislative Assistant in the United States Congress to the Hon. James Corman (Van Nuys).

Relocating to Los Angeles, Howard joined a union-side labor firm and represented a class of women in a landmark sex discrimination case in the United States Supreme Court, *Manhart v. City of Los Angeles, Dept. of Water & Power*, 435 U.S. 702 (1978). The *Manhart* case was recently featured in a book titled *Because of Sex: One Law, Ten Cases, and Fifty Years That Changed American Women's Lives at Work* as one of the ten cases decided by the United States Supreme Court that most affected women's lives in the workplace.

Howard formed his own boutique employer and management-side law firm in 1980 where he practiced until joining Blank Rome in January 2010.

Howard was elected a Fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers in 2015. He was recognized by the *Daily Journal* as one of California's top 75 labor and employment lawyers for 2014, has been a *California Super Lawyer* since 2006, and is rated AV-Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell. Howard is also listed in 2019 *Chambers USA* as a Recognized Practitioner.

Select Engagements

- Successfully represented a security guard company in a wage and hour class action jury trial in federal court; obtained terminating sanctions against class members for plaintiff's failure to comply with federal rules in a published Ninth Circuit opinion.
- Successfully represented dozens of employers in settling wage and hour class actions and PAGA representative actions in state and federal courts for claimed minimum wage, overtime, meal period, and rest break violations, and related penalties.
- Successfully represented a production company in a jury trial for wage and hour violations and defamation.
- Represented and obtained very favorable non-monetary settlement for a talent agency in a high-profile industry-wide age discrimination class action by writers against motion picture studios and talent agencies.
- Won summary judgment in hard fought age discrimination case against an international manufacturer affirmed by Court of Appeal.
- Obtained defense verdict in employment arbitration on behalf of a national radiology imaging company for alleged pregnancy discrimination and family law violations.
- Prevailed in collective bargaining agreement arbitration of a grievance filed on behalf of approximately 110 employees claiming they were not properly paid bonuses.

Admissions

- Supreme Court of the United States
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- California
- U.S. District Court - Central District of California

- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court - Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of California

Memberships

- American Bar Association
- Los Angeles County Bar Association
- The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers

Education

- University of California, Los Angeles, BA, Political Science Departmental Honors
- UCLA School of Law, JD

Recognitions

- 2019, Labor & Employment Law, listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2014, California's Top 75 Labor and Employment Lawyers, listed by *Daily Journal*
- 2020, "California Star," listed in *Benchmark Litigation*
- 2019–2020, "Labor & Employment Star - West," listed in *Benchmark Litigation*
- 2006–2020, "Los Angeles Super Lawyer" in Employment Litigation, listed in *Super Lawyers*
- AV Preeminent®, Judicial, listed by Martindale-Hubbell®
- AV Preeminent®, listed by Martindale-Hubbell®