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## René E. Thorne

Principal and Office Litigation Manager  
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### Practices

Class Actions and Complex Litigation  
Employee Benefits  
ERISA Complex Litigation

### Industries

Airline and Airline Service Providers  
Healthcare  
Life Sciences

### Education

Loyola University New Orleans School of Law J.D., 1993

### Admitted to Practice

- 1st Circuit Court of Appeals, 2014
- 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, 2000
- 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, 2005
- 8th Circuit Court of Appeals, 2020
- 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, 2011
- U.S. Court of Appeals, DC Circuit, 2017
- Illinois - N.D. Ill., 2013
- Indiana - S.D. Ind., 2016
- Louisiana - E.D. La., 1995
- Louisiana - M.D. La., 1995
- Louisiana - W.D. La., 1995

René E. Thorne is co-leader of the firm's ERISA Complex Litigation group, and is a principal and the office litigation manager in the New Orleans, Louisiana, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. Her practice covers the full range of employee benefit litigation matters, including representation of employers, plans, plan fiduciaries, and trustees.

In that regard, she has handled numerous ERISA class actions for clients such as Nortel Networks, Target, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, Owens Healthcare, United Airlines ESOP Committee, Dunbar Armored, United Companies, Benefits Administration Corporation, and Beverly Enterprises. René also has handled benefits and employment matters for such clients as for Alcatel-Lucent, Raytheon, Pfizer, Omega Protein, The Hartford, Northwest Airlines, Amtrak, United Airlines, Turner Industries, Starwood Hotels, and Sempra Energy. René has been retained in complex ERISA breach of fiduciary duty, prohibited transaction, and cash balance cases. René has been qualified and testified on ERISA matters in federal court.

René has been quoted in and authored several articles on ERISA issues including most recently, *Conkright v. Frommert*- One Year Later: Are Courts Getting It Right?, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (May 19, 2011); High Court Vacates CIGNA Pension Case; Sets Stage for Expanded ERISA Remedies, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (May 17, 2011); Employer Stock: Court Adopts DOL's Safe Harbor Reading, Affirms Ruling in Motorola 'Stock-Drop' Case, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (January 26, 2011); Court Certifies Class Action of Pension Plans, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (August 6, 2010); Two Years Later: The Legacy Of Larue, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (March 10, 2010); Employer Stock Decisions Spike in 2009 After Rocky Economy Ignites Litigation, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (Dec. 21, 2009); Rising Tide of Complex ERISA Litigation Presents Myriad of Class Certification Issues, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (September 18, 2009); ERISA Plan Fiduciaries Take Aim at Each Other as Investment Losses Rise, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (Feb. 26, 2009); The Evolution and Future of the ERISA Stock-Drop Cases, *Employment Law 360* (Jan. 2009); Year in Review: 2008 Proves to Be Eventful in Employee Benefits Litigation, *BNA Pension & Benefits Reporter* (Jan. 5, 2009).

René is active on the Employee Benefits Subcommittee of the Labor and Employment Section of the American Bar Association, and was recently the Management Co-Chair of the Employee Benefits Subcommittee Newsletter. She is a member of and lecturer for the ABA/EEO Liaison Committee of the American Bar Association, a past instructor for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy, and a former Barrister in the Thomas More Inn of Court.

During the course of her national practice, she has been admitted pro hac vice in courts across the country, including Alabama, the District of Columbia, California,

- Michigan - W.D. Mich., 2016
- Louisiana, 1994

Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin.

While attending Loyola University School of Law, René was a member of the *Loyola Law Review* and Moot Court.

## Social Media

LinkedIn

## Honors and Recognitions

- Law Dragon/Human Resource Executive, one of "The Most Powerful Employment Attorneys in America" (2011)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, "Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law", "Employment Law - Management", "Litigation - ERISA" and "Litigation - Labor and Employment" (2011-present)
- *Chambers USA*, "Labor & Employment" (2020)
- *Legal 500 USA*, "Recommended Attorney" (2020)
- *Martindale-Hubbell*, "AV Preeminent - Peer Rated for Highest Level of Professional Excellence" (2019)
- *The National Law Review*, "Go To Thought Leader" (2019)
- *Super Lawyers*®, "Super Lawyer" (2008-present)
- Who's Who Legal, "Recommended in Corporate Immigration" (2017)

## Pro Bono and Community Involvement

- New Orleans Pro Bono Project, Volunteer Attorney

## Published Works

- "ERISA Litigation Issues In The Face Of Bankruptcy," *The College of Labor & Employer Lawyers Newsletter* (Fall 2006)
- "Unforeseen Pitfalls in Settling Fiduciary Breach Claims with Individual Plaintiffs," *Employee Benefits Committee Newsletter* (Spring 2006)
- "ERISA Mutual Fund Litigation: Another Front In The Post-Enron 401(K) Plan Wars," *Professional Liability Underwriting Society Journal* (2004)
- "ERISA Preemption: To Infinity and Beyond and Back Again?" (A Historical Review of Supreme Court Jurisprudence), Vol. 58 *Louisiana Law Review* 997 (1998)
- "When is Class Action Appropriate?" in *ERISA Litigation* (BNA 2d, 3d, and 4th ed., and 2006-2012 supps.) [Chapter Author]
- *Employee Benefits Law* (2d ed. BNA 2000 and 3d ed. 2011) [Contributing Author]

## Speeches

- "ERISA Class Actions – Up Close and Personal: An In-Depth Look at the Myriad of Complex and Ever-Evolving Issues," BNA Audio-conference
- "401(k) Plan Litigation: Employer Stock Suits Continue but Has Hecker v. Deere Changed the Fee Case Landscape?," ABA Joint Committee on Employee Benefits
- "The Mist – Navigating the Fog of ERISA," LSU School of Law Labor and Employment Law Conference
- "The 401(k) & ESOP Employer Stock Cases: Cases and Issues," Professional Liability Underwriting Society International Conference
- "ERISA Litigation as a Contact Sport," Women's Executive Legal Conference
- "Litigating the New Breed of ERISA Class Actions," Glasser ERISA Litigation

Conference

- “After Enron: Employer Stock in 401(k) Plans,” ABA Joint Committee on Employee Benefits
- “Recent Developments in Health Insurance Coverage of Contraceptives for Employees,” ABA Taxation Section Employee Benefits Committee Meeting
- “ERISA Remedies After Great West – Are There Any?”
- “Employees in a Disaster: What to Do After Katrina,” ABA Joint Committee on Employee Benefits
- “Managing in a Crisis: Employment, Employee Benefits, and Insurance Law Issues for Employers Affected by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina,” American Petroleum Labor Lawyers Association