

Principal, Chicago

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Practices

- Hospitality
- Hotels
- Labor Relations
- Employment Litigation
- Restaurants
- Higher Education

Education

- Loyola University Chicago School of Law, J.D. 2009
- University of Illinois at Chicago, B.A. 2005

Admitted to Practice

- 6th Circuit Court of Appeals 2012
- 7th Circuit Court of Appeals 2018
- Illinois - C.D. Ill. 2017
- Illinois - N.D. Ill. 2010
- Illinois 2009

James D. Thomas is a principal in the Chicago, Illinois, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. He concentrates his practice in the representation of employers in labor and employment matters.

Jim regularly represents clients in federal and state courts. His practice includes counseling employers on labor and employment issues, defending labor and employment litigation, and negotiating and administering collective bargaining agreements. Jim has experience involving claims for breach of contract; trade secret and restrictive covenant issues; sexual and racial harassment; pregnancy, sex, race and age discrimination; wrongful discharge; and violations of the ADEA, ERISA, FMLA, FLSA, Illinois Public Labor Relations Act, National Labor Relations Act, Title VII, and other statutes.

As an advisor to employers, Jim counsels on a wide range of labor and employment issues including discharge and discipline, conducting harassment investigations, employee handbooks and policies, union organizing campaigns, double-breasting, drug testing, subcontracting, strikes and picketing, plant closings, and compliance with WARN and other federal, state, and local laws regarding civil rights and employment.

Representative Experience

- Represented employer in case of first impression in the Illinois Supreme Court about the scope of the Illinois Whistleblower Act and retaliatory discharge in the higher education field.
- Represented employers in grievance arbitration proceedings ranging from discipline to complex contract interpretation issues.
- Represented employers in a wide variety of industries in collective bargaining negotiations for units ranging in size up to thousands of employees.
- Represented employers faced with unfair labor practice charges before the Illinois Labor Relations Board and the National Labor Relations Board.
- Represented employers in the full spectrum of employment law claims, including multiple appeals.
- Defeated attempt to add putative ERISA breach of fiduciary duty class action claim to long-term disability lawsuit and ultimately won judgment for plan and its administrator on plaintiff's claim for benefits and plan's claim for overpayments.
- Represented prominent Chicago Alderman in First Amendment lawsuit that received national media coverage.
- Represented multiple governmental entities in interest arbitration proceedings pursuant to Section 14 of the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act.
- Defended municipal organization in a significant collective action alleging violations of the FLSA based on unpaid overtime.

Honors and Recognitions

- *Illinois Super Lawyers®*, "Rising Stars" (2015-2019, 2022-present)
- *Legal 500 USA*, "Recommended Attorney" (2021)