



Principal, Hartford

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Practices

- Construction
- Healthcare
- National Compliance and Multi-State Solutions
- Labor Relations
- Employment Litigation
- Transactional Services
- Private Equity
- Real Estate

Education

- Suffolk University Law School, J.D. 1994
- Boston College, B.A. 1991

Admitted to Practice

- Connecticut - D. Conn. 1995
- Massachusetts - D. Mass. 1995
- Connecticut 1994
- Massachusetts 1995
- New York 2007

Richard F. Vitarelli is a principal with the firm and co-leads the firm's nationwide Labor Relations practice and Transactional Services (M&A) groups.

He has almost three decades of experience representing employers in strategic labor relations and collective bargaining matters, including in the context of mergers and acquisitions, restructuring and bankruptcy. He serves as strategic labor and employment counsel for employers and multi-employer associations in various industries, including construction, infrastructure, new energy (offshore wind and solar), manufacturing, health care and senior living, airline, logistics, transit, higher education and state and local government.

Rick's collective bargaining practices includes the negotiation of national, multi-employer, specialty and industry agreements. His practice also includes representation of employers in multi-employer benefits matters, including multi-employer pension withdrawal liability and Taft-Hartley Fund collection matters. He represents employers covered by the National Labor Relations Act and the Railway Labor Act.

Rick supports employers, transactional law firms and investment firms throughout the U.S. with the labor, employment, employee benefits and immigration matters implicated in corporate transactions, leads legal diligence teams and negotiates definitive agreements within these areas. He also advises clients on post-transaction legal structure, operations and integration.

Rick regularly provides legal advice to clients in developing proactive employee relations programs, establishing and maintaining lawful double-breasted operations, and advising clients in the context of union organizing and decertification efforts.

Before joining Jackson Lewis, Rick was a practice group leader for a full-service AMLAW 200 law firm, overseeing the labor, employment, benefits and immigration practice. He served as outside general counsel to the Waterbury Connecticut Financial Planning and Assistance Board, a state takeover board created to restructure finances, labor agreements and post-employment benefits. He was a commissioner of the Connecticut State Ethics Commission from 1997 to 2004 and served as vice-chair and chair-elect from 2002 to 2004.

While attending law school, Rick was a member of the *Suffolk Transnational Law Review*.

Honors and Recognitions

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, "Employment Law – Management" and "Labor Law – Management" (2011-present)
- *Chambers USA*, "Labor & Employment" (2015-present)
- *Connecticut Law Tribune*, "New Leaders of the Law"
- *Connecticut Super Lawyers*®, "Super Lawyers" (2006-2019, 2021-present)

- *Hartford County Bar Association*, “Judge Maxwell Heiman Award”
- *Human Resource Executive*, recognized among twenty of “The Nation’s Most Powerful Employment Attorneys,” in the category of traditional labor law
- *Legal 500 USA*, “Recommended Attorney” (2016, 2020–2022) and “Leading Partner” (2023–present)
- *Lawdragon*, “500 Leading U.S. Corporate Employment Lawyers” (2020, 2021, 2025)
- *Martindale-Hubbell®*, “AV Preeminent® – Peer Rated for Highest Level of Professional Excellence” (2014–present)

Pro Bono and Community Involvement

- Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Past Director

Published Works

- “Employer’s Guide to Union Organizing Campaigns,” *Wolters-Kluwer/Aspen Publishers* (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 Editions) [Author]

Speeches

- “Navigating Strikes: Best Practices for Unionized Contractors and Employer Associations in the Construction Industry.” 2025 Associated General Contractors (AGC) Annual Convention. (Columbus, OH, Apr. 10, 2025).
- “Exploring the Impact of the Chamber’s Litigation Against the NLRB’s Now Vacated Joint Employer Rule.” Jackson Lewis Podcast. (June 26, 2024).
- “Beyond Defense: How Construction Employers Can Take Charge Against Union Misconduct.” 2024 Associated General Contractors (AGC) Labor and Employment Law Council Construction Labor Law Symposium (Washington, D.C., May 3, 2024).
- “Understanding Project Labor Agreement (PLA) Terms & Conditions to Protect Your Interests.” 2024 Associated General Contractors (AGC) Webinar (April 10, 2024).
- “The Legal Framework for Collective Bargaining: A Review of the Legal Framework of Bargaining and Issues for Multi-Employer Bargaining in the Construction Industry.” 2023 Associated General Contractors (AGC) Collective Bargaining Seminar (Las Vegas, NV, March 13, 2023)
- Legal Panelist: “Practical Considerations for Bargaining,” 2023 Associated General Contractors (AGC) Collective Bargaining Seminar (Las Vegas, NV, March 13, 2023)
- “Negotiating Project Labor Agreements – Key Term to Propose and Watch Out For”, Association of General Contractors (AGC) Labor and Employment Law Council Symposium (Washington, D.C., May 4, 2023)
- “The Bargaining Process: Unions and Carriers,” Airline and Railroad Labor and Employment Law, ALI-CLE, Airline and Railroad Labor and Employment Law Conference (Washington, DC, September 27, 2018)
- “2018 Top Wage and Hour Issues Facing Construction Contractors,” AGC Labor and Employment Law Council’s 34th Annual Construction Law Symposium (Washington, DC, May 4, 2018)
- “Workplace Legislative, Judicial & Regulatory Issues...2018 & Beyond,” Tri-State SHRM Conference (Mohegan Sun Convention Center, May 2, 2018)
- “Understanding and Living with Multi-Employer Pension Fund Withdrawal Liability,” Associated General Contractors (New York State, December 6, 2017)
- “Your Guide to the New NLRB,” CBIA/Jackson Lewis Employment Law Conference (Cromwell, CT, November 15, 2017, November 30, 2017)
- “Understanding and Living with Multi-Employer Pension Fund Withdrawal Liability,”

International Council of Employers Annual Meeting (Washington, DC, October 5-6, 2017)

- “The Bargaining Process: Unions and Carriers,” Airline and Railroad Labor and Employment Law, ALI-CLE, Airline and Railroad Labor and Employment Law Conference (Washington, DC, April 27, 2017)