



Menaka N. Fernando

Partner

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MENAKA N. FERNANDO is a partner at Outten & Golden's San Francisco office and focuses her practice on gender-based issues in the workplace. She is a member of the firm's [Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment](#) and [Family Responsibilities & Disabilities Discrimination](#) Practice Groups. Ms. Fernando represents individual employees in negotiation and litigation in a variety of employment matters including sexual harassment, gender and race discrimination, family and pregnancy leave, retaliation, and wrongful termination, among others. Ms. Fernando has extensive experience in litigating employment matters in state and federal court, arbitration, and before administrative agencies. Ms. Fernando also focuses on representing employees in negotiating employment and severance agreements.

Ms. Fernando employs an extremely client-centered approach to her practice and incorporates each client's unique circumstances and goals to tailor strategies that work best for each individual.

Throughout her career, Ms. Fernando has also been a policy crusader, lobbying and testifying before the California legislature to change the state's employment laws. She is the current Co-Chair of the California Employment Lawyers' Association and has worked on bills to strengthen the state's anti-discrimination and harassment laws.

Ms. Fernando serves on the Executive Board of the California Employment Lawyers Association, a statewide organization of over 1,200 California attorneys who devote their practice to representing employees. Ms. Fernando also serves on the boards of Open Door Legal, a San Francisco-based non-profit organization that strives to eradicate poverty through universal access to legal aid, and the Stand Up For Workers Political Action Committee, which works to elect Congressional candidates who prioritize workers' rights.

Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Fernando worked at several plaintiff-side employment and civil rights law firms in California. Ms. Fernando received her undergraduate degree from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2005 and her J.D. from UC Hastings College of the Law in 2010.

Bar Admissions & Professional Activities

- Ms. Fernando is admitted to practice law only in California.
- Ms. Fernando is admitted to the following federal courts: The United States District Courts for the Northern District of California, Central District of California; and Eastern District of California.
- Executive Board Member, California Employment Lawyers Association
- Co-Chair, Legislative Committee, California Employment Lawyers Association
- Board of Directors, Open Door Legal
- Board Member, Stand Up For Workers Political Action Committee

Speaking Engagements

2021

- Presenter: "[The Year in Review: Annual Employment Law Update \(Part 2\)](#)," California Employment Lawyers Association, CELA 34th Annual Employment Law Conference (Virtual), Virtual Panel
- Speaker: "Update on New Legislation Impacting Labor & Employment Lawyers," Marin County Bar Association, Virtual

2020

- Panelist: "Know Your Rights: An Interactive Webinar on Race and Gender Discrimination in the Technology Industry"
- Presenter: "The Year in Review: Annual Employment Law Update (Part 2)," CELA 33rd Annual Employment Law Conference, California Employment Lawyers Association, Virtual

2019

- Speaker: "Litigating Labor Code Section 970 Claims," California Employment Lawyers Association, CELA 32nd Annual Employment Law Conference, Oakland, CA

2018

- Speaker: "HIV/AIDS Discrimination in Employment, Beyond Prevention: The Obstacles in Defeating HIV," UC Hastings, Women's Law Journal Annual Symposium, San Francisco, CA

2017

- Panelist: "Reforming VC Roundtable," San Francisco, CA

2015

- Moderator: "Religious Discrimination Panel," CELA, Conference, Oakland, CA
- Speaker: "Pregnancy Discrimination Know Your Rights," Seminar, San Francisco, CA

Awards & Recognition

- 2021: Bloomberg Law's "They've Got Next: The 40 Under 40" Honoree
- 2021: Lawdragon 500 Plaintiff Employment Lawyers
- 2018-2021: Northern California Super Lawyers Rising Stars
- 2019: Northern California Women's Edition Rising Stars