



# HR LAW CANADA

## HALL OF FAME: CLASS OF 2025

*Two legends were  
inducted this year: David  
Doorey & Lorenzo Lisi*

## TOP 5 LAWYERS UNDER 40

*Meet the rising stars  
redefining excellence in  
workplace law across the  
country*

## THE BEST IN WORKPLACE LAW

*Canada's top  
labour and  
employment law  
firms are raising  
the bar*



## LAWYER OF THE YEAR

# JOHN HYDE

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WORKPLACE LAW



# EDITOR'S NOTE

**Todd Humber**

Publisher & Editor in Chief | HR Law Canada

**W**hen we first launched the idea of the HR Law Canada Awards, we weren't quite sure what to expect. Would the legal and HR communities embrace this opportunity to recognize excellence among their peers?

Would we receive enough nominations to make these awards meaningful? Would the caliber of nominees reflect the outstanding work we see daily in this field? The answer to all these questions was a resounding "yes" – and then some.

As I sit down to write this column, I'm still amazed by both the quantity and quality of nominations we received for our inaugural awards. The response wasn't just encouraging – it was overwhelming. It confirmed what we've long suspected: Canada's HR legal community is filled with brilliant minds, dedicated professionals, and genuine innovators who rarely stop to acknowledge their own significant contributions.

That's why these awards matter. The people doing this crucial work – protecting workers, advising employers, ensuring fairness and compliance with ever-changing laws – are typically too busy making a difference to pat themselves on the back.

So we decided to do it for them.

Inside these pages, you'll find remarkable stories of legal excellence. You'll meet John Hyde, our Lawyer of the Year, whose 30 years of experience and rare specialist certification have established him as one of Canada's most effective labour and employment lawyers.

You'll discover our Top 5 Under 40 – rising stars like Laura Freitag, Dasha Peregoud, Alex Kagan, Nathaniel Marshall, and Steven Lewis whose early accomplishments signal bright futures ahead.

You'll learn about Sarah Crossley, our Workplace Investigator of the Year, whose strategic approach to resolving high-stakes conflicts has earned her trust across management-labour divides.

And you'll read about *Timmins v. Artisan Cells*, our Most Interesting Case of the Year, which introduces a groundbreaking framework for challenging termination clauses.

We're particularly proud to inaugurate our Hall of Fame with two outstanding inductees: David Doorey and Lorenzo Lisi. Professor Doorey has dedicated 25 years to making complex legal concepts accessible both to law students and the broader public, while Lisi has spent more than three decades representing employers with innovative approaches to client education.

These titans of HR law have shaped the field through decades of contribution, mentorship, and innovation. Their legacy isn't just in landmark cases won or articles published – it's also evident in the generations of lawyers they've influenced and inspired.

What makes these recognitions meaningful is our rigorous selection process. You can't win if you're not nominated – and we, as publishers, maintained our integrity by prohibiting self-nominations.

Each winner earned their place through the genuine respect and admiration of colleagues, clients, and peers.

As I reviewed the nominations, I was struck by common themes that emerged across different categories. The most celebrated professionals weren't just technically excellent – they approached their work with humanity. They understood that behind every employment case are real people whose livelihoods and dignity hang in the balance. The best HR lawyers don't just know the law; they understand its purpose in protecting

human relationships in the workplace.

Another quality that distinguished our winners was their ability to find balance. Employment law often means navigating competing interests – workers' rights versus business needs, individual fairness versus organizational policy, letter of the law versus spirit of the law. Whether it's boutique firms like Hyde HR Law serving both major corporations and small businesses with equal commitment, or Roper Greyell representing some of Canada's largest employers while maintaining its position as a pre-eminent specialty firm, our award recipients consistently demonstrated wisdom in finding that delicate balance. Innovation also featured prominently in our winners' profiles.

The legal field sometimes gets stereotyped as traditional and resistant to change, but our honourees prove otherwise. From Franklin Law's flat-fee structure that focuses on achieving optimal resolutions rather than billable hours, to VanBuskirk Law's rapid rise to prominence with its balanced perspective, to the trauma-informed investigative approaches pioneered by Bob Stenhouse at Veritas Solutions, these professionals are actively shaping the future of HR law rather than simply practicing within its established boundaries.

Beyond individual accomplishments, these awards highlight something larger: the critical importance of HR law itself. In a time of rapid workplace

transformation – remote work, gig economy growth, artificial intelligence, shifting expectations between employers and employees – sound legal guidance has never been more valuable.

The professionals we celebrate aren't just applying static rules; they're helping organizations and workers navigate unprecedented change while preserving fundamental rights and responsibilities.

I hope these awards accomplish several things. First, I hope they give deserving recognition to those who rarely seek the spotlight.

Second, I hope they inspire the next generation of HR legal professionals by showcasing excellence in action.

Third, I hope they help HR departments and organizations identify top legal talent when they need guidance.

And finally, I hope they remind all of us why this field matters – because fair, legally sound workplaces benefit everyone.

As we look toward next year's awards, we're excited to make this an annual tradition of excellence. The bar has been set remarkably high by our inaugural winners, and I suspect the competition will only grow fiercer as these awards become established.

And to our readers: I invite you to explore these pages and discover the inspiring stories of those who are quietly shaping the future of work in Canada, one legal challenge at a time.

The legal field sometimes gets stereotyped as traditional and resistant to change, but our honourees prove otherwise.

# TOP LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT LAW FIRMS IN CANADA



**H**ydre HR Law, a boutique labour and employment law firm in Toronto, has built a reputation for specialized expertise that attracts clients ranging from international transportation companies to major universities.

The firm, located in downtown Toronto, serves clients across Canada and has established itself as a notable presence in Canadian employment law. The firm holds a rare specialist certification in labour and employment law from the Law Society of Ontario.

The firm has developed recognized sub-practices in transportation and construction labour relations, serving a diverse clientele that includes manufacturers, health care providers, and major breweries. The firm's founder, John Hyde, regularly contributes articles to labour and employment publications and presents at industry seminars.

This specialized focus appears to resonate with clients, as evidenced by the firm's 4.9-star Google review rating and its three consecutive Toronto Star Reader's Choice Awards for best legal services from 2022 through 2024.

What makes Hyde HR Law stand out in a competitive legal landscape is its role as a resource for other law firms. Colleagues frequently consult with the firm's team on complex labour and employment matters, particularly leveraging Hyde's specialist designation.

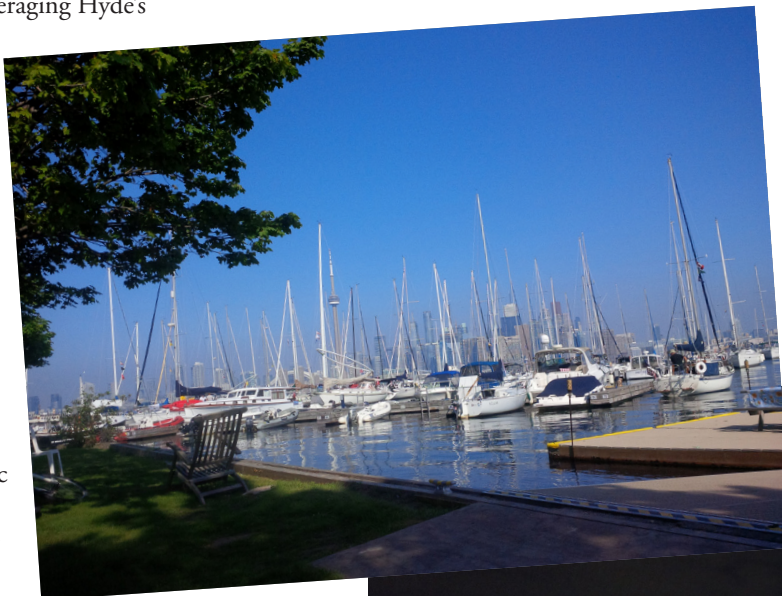
The firm's team approaches each client matter with the same level of commitment, whether for major institutional clients or smaller businesses navigating employment law challenges.

The firm's success demonstrates how boutique practices can thrive by developing deep expertise in specific legal niches rather than competing directly with full-service law firms.

By maintaining a sharp focus on labour and employment issues, Hyde HR Law has established itself as a go-to resource for organizations navigating the increasingly complex landscape of workplace regulations and employment relationships.



# HYDE HR LAW



ropergreyell



ropergreyell

EMPLOYMENT + LABOUR LAWYERS

**R**oper Greyell, a Vancouver-based workplace law firm, has experienced substantial expansion while collecting numerous accolades from leading legal authorities across Canada. It has maintained its position as a pre-eminent specialty boutique firm focused on workplace law while increasing its new matters by 45 percent and growing its client roster by eight percent in 2024 alone.

The firm represents some of the largest private and public sector employers in B.C. and across Canada, taking on significant cases that have shaped employment and labour law provincially and nationally.

Among the notable work in 2024, it represented the BC Maritime Employers Association in legal proceedings resolving a labour dispute that disrupted operations at Canada's largest port and cost the Canadian economy tens of millions daily.

The firm also represented Federally Regulated Employers – Transportation and Communications as an intervenor in precedent-setting cases involving strikes and lockouts at both national railways and Canada Post, affecting critical sectors of the Canadian economy.

This growth trajectory has led Roper Greyell to expand its team significantly, adding two new partners and bringing on 11 new associates and one associate counsel in 2024. The expansion has necessitated securing larger office space, with plans to double its downtown Vancouver footprint by 2026.

The firm's expertise has been widely recognized in 2024, with the Globe and Mail and Statista ranking it as the top firm for human rights in Canada and among the top 20 law firms across all practice areas nationwide.

Additional recognition came from Canadian Lawyer Magazine, Chambers Canada Guide, and Best Lawyers in Canada. At the individual level, 14 Roper Greyell lawyers were listed in the 2024 Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory, with six new additions reflecting the firm's continued growth.

Three of the firm's lawyers were recognized as Who's Who Legal Thought Leaders in Labour, Employment & Benefits, while 17 lawyers were acknowledged in the 2025 edition of The Best Lawyers in Canada.

The firm's commitment to innovation in workplace law and strategic problem-solving for complex employer issues has established it as one of Canada's largest employment and labour law boutiques, with a dedicated focus on understanding its clients' businesses.

# ROPER GREYELL





# VANBUSKIRK LAW



**V**anBuskirk Law, a recently established New Brunswick law firm, has quickly claimed its place among the region's notable legal practices despite being in operation for less than a year. Founded in August 2024, it has rapidly gained recognition for its expertise in labour and employment law. It has already achieved "Tier 1" regional status from BestLawyers in both labour and employment law and administrative law.

The Saint John-based boutique firm brings more than 50 years of collective experience to its practice. Led by principal Kelly VanBuskirk, K.C., who contributes over three decades of specialized experience, the firm has been involved in several precedent-setting cases that have shaped employment law across New Brunswick.

Among its notable achievements, the firm secured the largest employment law award and general damages award in New Brunswick history. In *Dornan v New Brunswick (Health)*, VanBuskirk Law represented the President and CEO of the New Brunswick Horizon Health Network, obtaining a landmark \$200,000 aggravated damages award and an overall judgment totaling approximately \$2 million.

The firm is currently representing a former prominent MLA in a groundbreaking human rights case involving discrimination based on political belief. After extensive procedural proceedings, the case now awaits a decision from the Board of Inquiry.

Despite its recent establishment, VanBuskirk Law serves a diverse client base including regional employers, employees, professionals facing disciplinary matters, and administrative tribunals.

Members of the firm regular-

ly appear on behalf of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission and other public bodies.

Beyond legal practice, the firm demonstrates commitment to community engagement and professional development.

Its lawyers teach courses at the University of New Brunswick Faculty of Law and Dalhousie University in employment law, labour law, negotiations, and trial practice.

The firm recently sponsored a public film screening for Truth and Reconciliation Day at Saint John's Imperial Theatre and is supporting the upcoming Labour Law Summit hosted by CPHR New Brunswick in May 2025.

The firm's comprehensive experience representing employers, employees, unions, and tribunals provides its team with a balanced perspective that enhances their effectiveness as advocates and problem-solvers in employment and labour matters across Atlantic Canada.



# FRANKLIN LAW

**franklinlaw**  
fighting injustice at work

**F**ranklin Law, a Toronto-based employment law firm, has distinguished itself through an innovative flat-fee billing structure and exceptional advocacy for marginalized clients facing workplace issues. Led by principal Ron Franklin, has developed a reputation for strategic creativity and meticulous preparation that has impressed both clients and opposing counsel in employment tribunals across Ontario.

The firm's approach begins with a comprehensive initial consultation priced at \$325, which includes thorough document review before the meeting, an in-depth consultation, and a detailed follow-up report outlining case strengths, weaknesses, and recommended next steps.

This client-centered strategy stands

in contrast to traditional hourly billing models common among employment law practices. Clients report that this approach places the focus on achieving optimal resolutions rather than accumulating billable hours.

Franklin Law has successfully represented clients before both the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and the Ontario Labour Relations Board, with particular success in resolving cases during mediation.

The firm has developed specialized expertise in representing clients from marginalized communities, including racialized individuals and persons with disabilities. This focus has proven particularly valuable in employment and human rights cases where issues of race, disability, gender identity, and faith intersect with workplace disputes.

Former clients note that Franklin's strategic thinking often produces innovative solutions that surprise opposing counsel and mediators. His thorough

analysis and preparation have been cited as key factors in achieving favorable outcomes in complex cases.

Beyond technical legal expertise, clients highlight the firm's exceptional client service. The practice maintains strong communication throughout legal proceedings and demonstrates sensitivity to the emotional challenges clients face during employment disputes.

In a field where top-tier representation often comes with prohibitive costs, Franklin Law has created an alternative model that balances affordability with high-quality representation. This approach has made sophisticated employment law advocacy accessible to clients who might otherwise struggle to secure effective legal support.

The firm's commitment to both legal excellence and accessibility reflects an understanding that employment disputes often create significant financial and emotional strain for individuals already navigating difficult circumstances.

HYDE **HR** LAW

# Award-winning Workplace Law Firm



Hyde HR Law has been named one of Canada's Top Labour & Employment Law Firms and is proud to be recognized among Toronto's best. Founded by John Hyde — recipient of the HR Law Canada 2025 Lawyer of the Year award and one of the few lawyers certified as a specialist in labour and employment law by the Law Society — the firm represents clients nationwide. From multinational corporations to individuals and associations, Hyde HR Law delivers the detail, excellence and commitment that define effective legal advocacy.

**416-841-0001**



**HydeHRLaw.com**





IT'S AN HONOUR TO BE CHOSEN AS A

# Top Employment Boutique

2025

BY HR LAW CANADA

Thank you, HR Law Canada, for this recognition. We especially thank our clients for putting their trust in us.

If you're navigating a workplace challenge, we're here to help.

[vanbuskirklaw.ca](http://vanbuskirklaw.ca)

1 GERMAIN STREET, 12TH FLOOR, SAINT JOHN, NB E2L 4V1



**H**um Law Firm is marking its 11th year of operation with recognition for its distinctive approach to representing both employers and employees in workplace disputes.

Founded by lawyer Lai-King Hum, it has built its practice on the principle that understanding perspectives from both sides of employment law strengthens the firm's ability to provide strategic advice.

The boutique firm specializes in workplace investigations, litigation, and professional regulation while maintaining a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in both its practice and community involvement.

Unlike some employment law practices that have adopted more aggressive approaches post-pandemic, Hum Law Firm emphasizes proactive risk management and maintaining enforceable contracts while preserving client rights.

Beyond legal representation, the firm has established itself as a resource for government and quasi-government organizations through various approved provider lists, providing investigation services to both public and private sector clients.

Hum, who has over 25 years of legal experience, brings multiple perspectives to her practice. In addition to leading her firm, she serves as a Deputy Judge of the Toronto Small Claims Court, counsel in the Discrimination and Harassment Counsel Program at the Law Society of Ontario, and Independent Complaints Review Officer with the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants.

The firm's founder has maintained an active leadership presence in the legal community, including serving as past National President of the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, past Chair of the Roundtable of Diversity Associations, and current Chair of the Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic.

Clients cite the firm's ability to provide timely, strategic advice while balancing legal protection with organizational values. The firm has received particular praise for its work with regulated industries and professional regulatory bodies.

Since its founding, Hum Law Firm has maintained a commitment to improving access to justice, providing pro bono or reduced-rate services to non-governmental organizations and nonprofits across all practice areas.

Through this balanced approach to workplace law and community involvement, the firm has established itself as a distinctive voice while maintaining its founder's philosophy that "caring is the only daring."



# HUM LAW FIRM





# WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS YOU CAN TRUST. EXPERTISE YOU CAN RELY ON

## Why choose Hum Law Firm?

- Trusted by employers, HR leaders, and legal teams
- Employment law experts
- Clear reporting and actionable insights

If you are dealing with a workplace conflict and you are not sure how to proceed, Hum Law Firm can help you navigate your current situation.

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THEHURLAWFIRM.CA



**HUM**  
LAW FIRM

**W**hitten & Lublin, a Toronto-based employment law firm, has established itself among Canada's premier workplace legal specialists while advancing new legal frameworks that could reshape how employment contracts are challenged.

With a team of 17 lawyers focused exclusively on employment law, it has built a reputation that draws referrals from other law firms across the country. The boutique firm represents both employers and employees across a wide spectrum of workplace matters.

In 2024, the firm settled over 1,000 cases through out-of-court negotiations while also securing significant victories in two notable court cases that could influence the future direction of Canadian employment law.

The firm's groundbreaking work in *Timmins v. Artisan Cells* introduced a novel framework for challenging termination clauses that differs from traditional approaches. Rather than focusing solely on specific clause wording, the case centered on the method of contract enforcement itself.

This innovative legal strategy argued that contracts requiring civil court proceedings instead of Ministry of Labour complaints contradicted the Employment Standards Act by creating a more costly and protracted process for employees seeking redress.

Although the judge ultimately decided the case on other grounds, the inclusion of this argument in the court record opens potential new avenues for challenging or crafting termination clauses in future employment cases.

In another significant decision, *Borden v. 2554318 Ontario Inc.*, the firm secured eight months' salary plus punitive damages for wrongful dismissal for a three-month employee who had been enticed away from stable employment and then terminated under false pretenses.

The firm's standing in the Canadian legal community is reflected in multiple recognitions, including Best Law Firm in 2024, Canada's Best Law Firm by *The Globe and Mail*, and Top Labour & Employment Boutique Law Firm by *Canadian Lawyer*.

Client satisfaction appears equally strong, with the firm maintaining a 4.9-star rating across more than 900 Google reviews.

Their reputation has extended to social media platforms like Reddit, which now generates a steady stream of client referrals each month.



# WHITTEN & LUBLIN



# LAWYER OF THE YEAR



# WINNER: JOHN HYDE

**A** background in operations and human resources management has helped distinguish John Hyde as one of Canada's most effective labour and employment lawyers.

The founder of Hyde HR Law brings 30 years of experience to his practice, where he advises management on all aspects of employment and labour relations. This practical experience before entering law gives him insight that few other practitioners can match.

According to his nomination, Hyde is "a relentless advocate, who always puts his clients first" with "significant experience in HR matters" and "passion about assisting employers in all areas of labour and employment law."

Hyde is one of only 17 lawyers certified as a Specialist in Labour Law by the Law Society of Ontario. This rare designation reflects his deep expertise in an increasingly complex legal field.

His career path wasn't typical for a lawyer. Before attending law school, Hyde earned both a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Guelph, then worked in operations and human resources management prior to pursuing legal education. He ultimately earned both Canadian (LL.B.) and American (J.D.) law degrees and was called to the bar in 1993.

His practice represents management across a diverse client base, from international companies to healthcare providers, universities and major breweries. His services include representation before administrative tribunals, collective agreement negotiation, arbitrations, wrongful dismissal defence and human rights cases.

Beyond major corporations, Hyde has maintained a commitment to helping small businesses establish sound human resources practices. His nomination highlights that he has "helped numerous small businesses get off the ground by assisting them in establishing sound Human Resources practices, employment contracts, workplace policies, and the like."

His legal guidance extends to strategic advice on labour and employment matters during complex business transactions such as mergers, acquisitions and business sales — critical junctures where employment

issues can significantly impact outcomes.

Before founding his current firm, Hyde served as managing partner at one of Canada's best-known law firms, demonstrating leadership abilities that complement his legal expertise.

The nomination also notes that "he is an excellent mentor to younger lawyers looking to hone their skills in the areas of labour and employment law."

His firm maintains a 4.9-star Google review rating and has won the Toronto Star's Reader's Choice Award for best legal services for three consecutive years (2022-2024).

Hyde maintains active involvement in professional organizations, including membership in the Law Society of Ontario, Canadian Bar Association (Ontario), Transportation Lawyers Association of America and Canadian Transport Lawyers' Association. He has served as a director of both the North American Transportation Employee Relations Association and the Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario.

According to his bio, Hyde's pre-law background "provides him with the unique opportunity to assist clients in the formulation of practical legal solutions, specifically tailored to their needs."

He has authored numerous articles in labour and employment publications and frequently presents seminars on labour and employment law matters.

Hyde represents private, public and institutional clients in a wide variety of labour

and employment matters across Canada, bringing a pragmatic approach informed by both his legal expertise and real-world HR experience.



# SILVER: CHRIS DRINOVZ

**A** mathematical mind and passion for writing have proven to be the perfect foundation for one of British Columbia's most respected employment lawyers.

Chris Drinovz, founder and head of KSW Lawyers' Employment & Labour Group, has built a reputation for delivering precise, effective legal solutions for employers across the province.

As partner at KSW Lawyers, Drinovz has transformed the firm into a powerhouse for labour and employment law. His leadership helped the firm earn recognition in the 2025 edition of The Best Law Firms in Canada for Labour and Employment Law.

Drinovz maintains a comprehensive practice advising business leaders and organizations on all aspects of the employer-employee relationship.

His expertise spans from drafting employment contracts and workplace policies to conducting sensitive workplace investigations, providing WorkSafeBC advice, and negotiating complex severance packages.

When high-stakes matters arise, Drinovz brings versatility and skill to the table. His experience includes handling wrongful dismissal cases, employment standards issues, human rights complaints, and securing injunctions to protect confidential information or enforce non-compete agreements.

"His proactive approach to dispute resolution through negotiation and mediation exemplifies his commitment to resolving employer's conflicts efficiently and effectively," notes his award nomination.

Beyond his client work, Drinovz holds significant leadership positions in the legal and business communities. He serves as Chair of the Employment Law Section within the Canadian Bar Association BC and as President of the Board of Directors for the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce.

His community involvement extends to membership on the Policy Review Committee for the BC Chamber of Commerce and participation in Access Pro Bono's Lawyer Referral Service.

A sought-after speaker, Drinovz



regularly presents on employment and labour law topics to organizations including the Manufacturing Safety Alliance of BC, Canadian HR Reporter, CPHR HR Conference & Expo, and the Continuing Legal Education Society of BC.

He launched KSW's annual Employment Law Conference, providing employers across the Lower Mainland with updates on crucial developments in the field.

Industry recognition has followed Drinovz throughout his career. He was recognized in the 2025 edition of The Best Lawyers in Canada for Labour and Employment Law and listed as "Repeatedly Recommended" in the 2024 Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory.

In 2023, Canadian HR Reporter selected him as a 5-Star Employment Lawyer and named him "Best Employment Lawyer and Law Firm" across Canada. The Surrey Board of Trade made him a finalist for Business Person of the Year at their 2022 Business Excellence Awards. From 2019 to 2023, Drinovz ranked

among the Top 3 Best Employment Lawyers in Langley, Surrey, and Abbotsford by ThreeBestRated.

His notable case victories include *Forbes v. Glenmore Printing Ltd.*, 2023 BCSC 25, which demonstrated his ability to navigate complex employment disputes.

Drinovz dedicates significant time to mentoring the next generation of employment lawyers. According to his nomination, "he invests time in developing junior lawyers and works closely with paralegals and legal assistants, ensuring the strength and growth of the Employment Law Group at every level."

This commitment to mentorship creates a collaborative environment that contributes to his firm's ongoing success and development of new legal talent in the field.

Clients consistently describe Drinovz as attentive to detail, highly communicative, compassionate, professional and hardworking — a lawyer who tirelessly advocates for employer interests while maintaining the highest professional standards.

# CHRIS DRINOVZ

- 1) HR Law Canada Silver Winner 2025 Lawyer of the Year
- 2) Practising employment law for over 15 years
- 3) Dedicated to resolving workplace issues
- 4) Can occasionally be found skiing on the slopes of Whistler

 HR LAW CANADA

  
**K S W**  
**LAWYERS**

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Representation Tailored to  
your Needs Since 1973



# Aird & Berlis Proudly Congratulates Our 2025 HR Law Canada Award Winners



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HR Law Canada Hall of Fame



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Top Workplace Lawyers Under 40



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Top Workplace Lawyers Under 40

The Aird & Berlis Workplace Law Group offers practical advice on a broad spectrum of labour and employment law matters. Our dedicated practitioners advise employers on their day-to-day concerns, provide employment advice on commercial transactions, and work with employers to navigate regulations, manage risks and ensure compliance.

We regularly represent employers before the courts and tribunals, both provincially and federally, including the Ontario Labour Relations Board, the Canada Industrial Relations Board, the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal, the Ontario Court of Justice, the Superior Court of Justice, the Pay Equity Hearing Tribunal and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

# SILVER: NICOLE SINGH

A commitment to fostering inclusive workplaces while expertly guiding employers through complex labour relations has established Nicole Singh as a standout employment lawyer.

The Fasken partner brings comprehensive experience to her management-side practice, regularly advising public and private sector employers on issues ranging from labour disputes and grievance arbitrations to human rights accommodations and wrongful dismissals.

Singh's practice includes representing clients before arbitrators, courts, the Ontario Labour Relations Board, and the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario. She also advises employers on labour issues arising from corporate restructurings and mergers and acquisitions.

"Her proactive approach to complex legal matters and her leadership in diversity initiatives have significantly impacted both her clients and the broader legal community," notes her award nomination.

Singh frequently serves as an external investigator for workplace investigations, addressing allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, harassment, racial profiling, bullying, and employee misconduct. Her investigation experience extends to sensitive matters involving senior leadership.

Her background includes substantial experience in both healthcare and professional services. She spent over a year at a large acute care hospital managing labour and employment litigation while providing day-to-day legal advice to the human resources department.

Singh also worked as employment counsel within the Office of the General Counsel at a large professional services firm, where she advised on employment matters and helped manage employment litigation.

Her commitment to diversity and inclusion extends beyond client work through her active role in Fasken's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Singh co-leads the LAWS mentorship program at Fasken, supporting high school students facing barriers to educational advancement.

"Her dedication to diversity and inclusion is evident through her active role in



Fasken's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee," according to her nomination. Singh was promoted to partner at Fasken effective January 1, 2021, reflecting her significant contributions to the firm and her field.

She has been featured in the National Bar Association Commercial Law Section's Attorney Spotlight, highlighting her expertise in labour, employment, and human rights law.

Her community involvement includes serving as Director (Legal) for We Care, demonstrating her commitment to service and mentorship beyond her legal practice.

Organizations facing potentially litigious workplace matters or those that could draw media scrutiny frequently turn to Singh for her ability to conduct thorough and unbiased investigations. Her approach combines extensive investigation experience with a deep under-

standing of racial discrimination and other forms of workplace misconduct.

Among her professional achievements are the successful representation of clients in high-stakes employment litigation and the development of comprehensive workplace policies that promote compliance while fostering positive work environments.

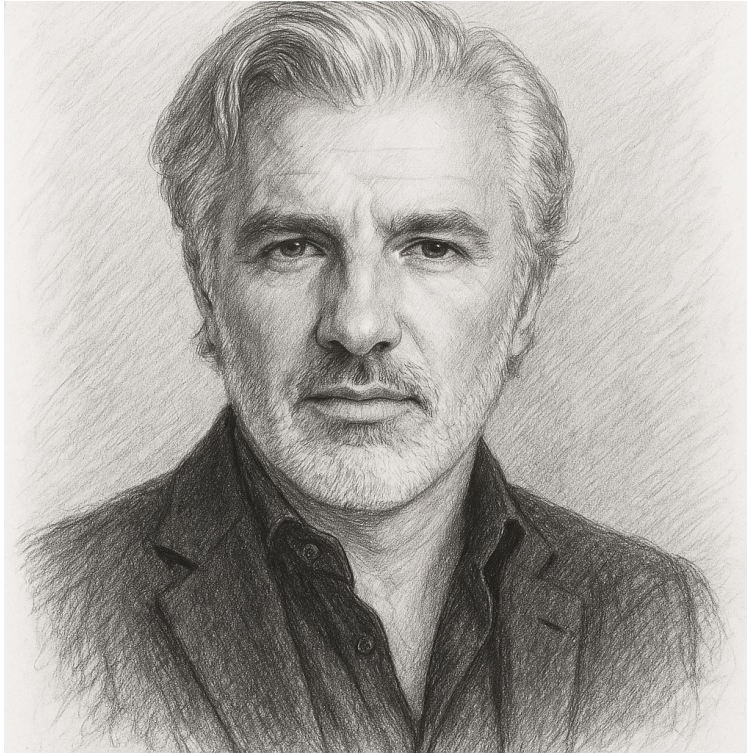
Singh exemplifies how employment lawyers can serve management interests while simultaneously working to create more equitable workplace cultures – balancing employer needs with progressive approaches to diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Her practice demonstrates that effective employment counsel can help organizations build stronger internal policies while successfully navigating the increasingly complex landscape of labour and employment law in Canada.

# HR LAW CANADA HALL OF FAME



# 2025 INDUCTEE: DAVID DOOREY



**A** pioneering approach to teaching labour law has earned David Doorey recognition as one of Canada's most influential work law scholars.

For nearly 25 years, Professor Doorey has dedicated himself to making complex legal concepts accessible not only to law students but to the broader public, leaving an indelible mark on how Canadians understand workplace rights.

His distinctive teaching style has drawn countless students into the field of work law, while his textbooks "The Law of Work" and "Canadian Labour Relations: Law, Policy and Practice" have become standard resources in universities and colleges nationwide.

Doorey's influence extends far beyond academic circles. His blog *LawofWork.ca*, launched in 2008, stands as one of Canada's longest-running legal blogs and has been voted the country's top law blog multiple times. He has become the most frequently cited academic by Canadian media on work law issues.

Since 2002, Doorey has taught labour

and employment law to thousands of students. For 12 years, he developed and led Osgoode Hall Law School's specialist Master of Laws program in Labour and Employment Law. He currently serves as Director of York University's School of Human Resource Management, Canada's largest school in the human resources management field.

His scholarly work on labour relations has earned international recognition and has been cited by the Supreme Court of Canada on multiple occasions. He was called to the Bars of Ontario and British Columbia in 1997 and practiced work law in both provinces before dedicating himself to academia.

Among his current initiatives is the High School Work Law Project, which develops materials for teachers to educate teenagers about workers' rights, further extending his commitment to legal education beyond traditional academic settings.

Doorey's contributions have earned him numerous accolades, including the H.D. Woods Lecture Award, the

Sefton Memorial Lecture Award, the Morley Gunderson Award, and the David Watson Award for significant contributions to legal scholarship.

His research spans diverse aspects of work law, including collective bargaining, labour standards, human rights, climate change impacts on work, and labour in global supply chains. A recent article examines the history of human resources as a discipline and the emergence of "HR Law" as a distinct legal field — the first published work to recognize this development.

Despite his extensive contributions, Doorey's nomination describes him as "an under-recognized contributor to the field of labour law in Canada" who "has been participating for decades in critical ways towards the development of human resources as a discipline from an academic perspective."

His induction into the HR Law Canada Hall of Fame recognizes a career spent bridging the gap between legal theory and practical application, making workplace law accessible to everyone.

# Congratulations

to Professor David Doorey on being selected for the  
*HR Law Canada Hall of Fame Award*



DAVID J. DOOREY

“

Comprehensive, insightful, learned, provocative, teachable, and a visual treat. David Doorey and his guest experts have touched all the bases. This is *the* Canadian employment and labour law text for our time.

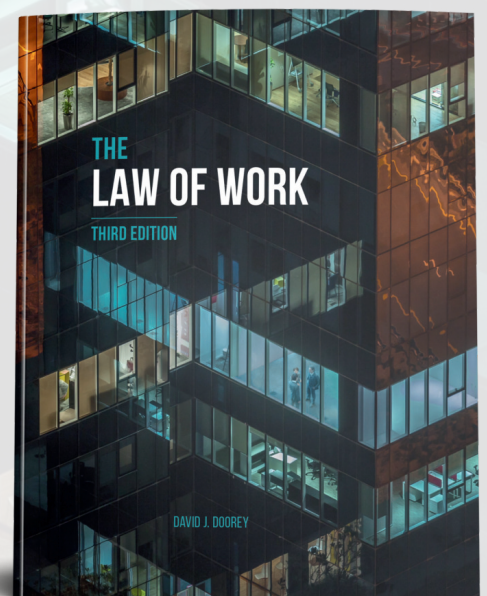
—Professor Emeritus Harry Arthurs

”

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Professor David Doorey's *The Law of Work* is Canada's leading text on labour and employment law and the only book to examine in detail the common law of employment, work-related legislation, and collective bargaining law.

[U.EMOND.CA/LOW3-HRLAW](http://U.EMOND.CA/LOW3-HRLAW)



# 2025 INDUCTEE: LORENZO LISI



**A** commitment to practical legal solutions and an innovative approach to client education has earned Lorenzo Lisi recognition as one of Canada's foremost employer-side labour lawyers.

As practice group leader of Aird & Berlis LLP's Workplace Law Group, Lisi has spent more than three decades representing employers on labour and employment matters across federal and provincial jurisdictions.

His dedication to building a respected practice is evident in the group's numerous accolades, including being named recipient of Canadian HR Reporter's "2024 Readers Choice Award: Employment & Labour Full Service Law Firm" and recognition in Chambers Canada, The Legal 500 Canada, and the inaugural edition of Best Lawyers' "Best Law Firms in Canada."

Lisi has also earned individual recognition as a leading practitioner in multiple legal directories, including Chambers Canada, The Legal 500 Canada, The Best Lawyers in Canada, The Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory, and The Lexpert/American Lawyer Guide to the Leading 500 Lawyers in Canada.

"Lorenzo has built the firm's Workplace Law Group from the ground up in the past twelve years," his nomination states. "The Group now consists of nine dedicated employment, labour and occupational health and safety lawyers who work with employers to navigate regulations, manage risks and ensure compliance."

His practice spans all aspects of workplace law, from defending employers against employee claims involving wrongful dismissal, human rights violations and harassment to handling complex labour matters in unionized workplaces. His extensive experience includes grievance and labour board litigation, injunctive proceedings, union certification applications, collective bargaining and grievance arbitration.

Beyond direct client representation, Lisi has established himself as a thought leader in workplace law through an extensive program of educational initiatives. He was the originator of the firm's regular seminars, webinars and legal bulletins that keep clients and HR professionals informed about legislative and interpretive changes affecting workplace policies.

Lisi frequently engages in external speaking engagements and publishing on human resources topics. Recent presentations have covered diverse subjects including diversity and inclusion, workplace accommodations, employee free speech, hybrid work arrangements, mental health, and gender identity in the workplace.

His contributions to the profession extend to leadership roles in key organizations. Lisi has served on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association of Counsel to Employers and as a member of the Government Affairs Committee of the Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario. He is also a board member for both the Toronto Foundation for Student Success and Scarborough General Hospital Foundation.

His client roster includes multinational corporations such as PepsiCo Canada, Xerox Canada, Lear Corporation Canada, and Evonik Corporation, along with numerous Ontario municipalities.

"Lorenzo is very good at giving us the advice we need that fits our business needs and risk tolerance," one client testimonial states.

# WORKPLACE INVESTIGATOR OF THE YEAR



# WINNER: SARAH CROSSLEY

A strategic approach to resolving high-stakes workplace conflicts has established Sarah Crossley as one of Canada's most sought-after workplace investigators.

Known for handling sensitive investigations with both thoroughness and discretion, Crossley has built a reputation for delivering legally sound findings even under intense public scrutiny and tight deadlines.

"Sarah's ability to both navigate complex and volatile situations with speed is unparalleled," notes her award nomination.

Crossley has been entrusted with some of Canada's most high-profile workplace investigations in recent years. In 2024, after an extensive selection process, the Government of Canada retained her to lead an independent review into the appointment of Birju Dattani as Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

The investigation followed media reports that Dattani had made anti-Israel posts under a different name, drawing criticism from Jewish advocacy groups while Muslim advocacy organizations argued he was being unfairly treated.

Working under tight deadlines and significant public pressure, Crossley completed the review in less than a month. The report was published on the Government of Canada's website, and Dattani resigned before taking office.

In another notable case, Crossley conducted a workplace review involving allegations of a toxic work environment. The comprehensive investigation included interviewing more than 100 employees and contractors across all organizational levels. She delivered a thorough report within two months of being retained – significantly faster than comparable reviews.

"As part of this mandate, Sarah gathered information about the workplace culture and environment, practices, and behaviours and advised on areas of improvement," her nomination states. "Sarah's findings and conclusions resulted in positive changes to the workplace."

Her objectivity has earned her trust across management-labour divides. Despite primarily practicing as a management-side labour and employment lawyer, Crossley was retained to inves-



tigate the work environment at a large union following allegations of a toxic workplace and gender discrimination.

In another case, Crossley was hired by a charitable organization's board of directors to investigate anonymous complaints about their executive director. While harassment allegations weren't substantiated, she uncovered a pattern of misconduct including misuse of funds, theft and dishonesty, leading to the executive director's termination for cause.

Beyond her investigation work, Crossley contributes to advancing professional standards in the field. She has been an instructor at the Osgoode Certificate in HR Law for HR Professionals since 2012 and frequently speaks on workplace investigation best practices.

She recently authored the inaugural Chambers guide to internal investigations in Canada, along with an

article highlighting trends and developments in workplace investigations.

Crossley has been recognized as a leading practitioner in employment, labour and workplace human rights by numerous legal directories, including Chambers Canada, Lexpert, Who's Who Legal, Best Lawyers and Thomson Reuters Stand-Out Lawyer. She is also a Fellow of the American College of Labor and Employment Lawyers.

"Her investigative work not only resolves immediate workplace concerns but also drives long-term improvements in organizational culture and governance," states her nomination.

Through her combination of legal precision, speed, and discretion, Crossley has established herself as a stand-out workplace investigator capable of handling the most challenging and publicly scrutinized cases in Canada.

# SILVER: BOB STENHOUSE

A commitment to raising the professional standard of workplace investigations has earned Bob Stenhouse recognition as one of Canada's leading workplace investigators.

As CEO of Veritas Solutions, Stenhouse has transformed a startup into one of Western Canada's premier investigation firms in just six years, overseeing more than 200 workplace investigations annually while simultaneously training hundreds of HR professionals in investigation best practices.

Since its founding in 2019, Veritas Solutions has experienced 600% growth, establishing itself as a leader in HR risk management, workplace investigations, and corporate training. The firm now conducts over 250 workplace investigations yearly, specializing in high-risk and complex cases with significant public exposure.

"Bob has been conducting, case managing and overseeing serious and complex investigations for 40 years," notes his nomination. "In addition to his former police investigation career, almost twenty of those years have been in the workplace/HR, regulatory, and human rights fields."

Stenhouse has focused particularly on addressing allegations of misconduct such as harassment, bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination. The firm's investigations have withstood scrutiny by arbitrators, ombudsmen, the Public Interest and Disclosure Commissioner, and civil courts. Beyond conducting investigations, Stenhouse has made substantial contributions to advancing the field by sharing expertise with HR professionals. In partnership with the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources (CPHR) organizations across Western Canada, he developed and delivers a three-day Workplace Investigations Training certificate program that consistently sells out.

"Specifically in 2024/2025 Bob has trained over 200 members since March 1, 2024," his nomination states. "The course evaluations received are consistently very high, with many learners identifying the course as the best they have taken in their professional life."

Since 2020, Stenhouse has trained over 800 members with CPHR Alberta



alone, plus several hundred more HR professionals in other western provinces.

The training combines theory, practice, breakout sessions, interviewing techniques, and relevant case studies.

"The Human Resources professional, as a large part of their role, are often required to conduct administrative investigations. The right training for this skill-set is limited within degree, diploma, and certificate post-secondary offerings," explains his nomination.

One participant noted: "I now feel confident and well-equipped to handle workplace investigations with a thorough and methodical approach. The practical exercises and real-life scenarios provided during the training have been invaluable in helping me apply the concepts learned to actual situations in my workplace."

Stenhouse has been particularly innovative in developing trauma-informed approaches to workplace investigations. Veritas launched the first Trauma In-

formed HR Professional program in Canada through CPHR associations in Western Canada and developed a trauma-informed corporate training series.

To ensure quality, all Veritas investigations undergo an extensive quality assurance process reviewed by a Director of Quality Assurance who is also a licensed lawyer.

Beyond investigations, the firm provides comprehensive "wrap around" services including workplace assessments, HR risk consulting, workplace restoration following serious investigations, and training in respectful workplaces and psychological safety.

"His integrity, work ethic, years of experience and commitment to justice sets a high standard," notes one recommendation. "Bob's influence and experience is being paid forward and has had a trickle effect on the many people he has trained, to ensure proper and ethical investigations are taken place in many organizations."



## Congratulations Sarah Crossley

## 2025 Workplace Investigator of the Year

Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP is one of Canada's largest and highest-ranked law firms practicing exclusively management-side labour, employment, and human rights law.

We are proud to congratulate our colleague, Sarah Crossley, on being named HR Law Canada's 2025 Workplace Investigator of the Year.

This recognition honours Sarah's outstanding leadership and expertise in managing complex and high-profile workplace investigations. Her commitment to integrity, fairness, and thoroughness has earned her the trust of clients and peers across the country.

Sarah's contributions extend beyond her investigative work; she is a respected thought leader and educator who continuously advances best practices in workplace investigations. Her dedication and knowledge strengthens not only our firm but also the broader labour and employment law community.

Congratulations Sarah!

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# TOP 5 LAWYERS UNDER 40





## LAURA FREITAG

A commitment to balanced workplace investigations and complex employment litigation has established Laura Freitag as a rising star in Canadian labour and employment law.

Despite her youth, Freitag has already developed significant experience in challenging litigation matters, including picketing injunctions, employee fraud cases, sexual harassment proceedings, and human rights tribunals.

Her notable legal victories include successfully arguing a novel issue in workplace investigation negligence in *Lee v. Magna International Inc.* and defending an investment fund against a \$1.83 million performance fee claim in *Bowen et al v. JC Clark Ltd.*

Freitag has also worked on high-profile investigations, serving as co-investigator in the 2022 Lisa LaFlamme case and the 2024 investigation into the Government of Canada's appointment of the Chief Human Rights Commissioner, which garnered national media attention.

"Laura's experience is varied and notable, particularly in comparison to her peers of her vintage in the field of labour and employment law," her nomination states.

Beyond her practice, Freitag has demonstrated commitment to pro bono work through the Innocence Project and Pro Bono Ontario. She volunteers at the Civil Practice Court Duty Program and conducts Appellate Merit Assessments. She was also co-counsel on a significant pro bono case involving CPP disability benefits.

Freitag contributes to legal education as a lecturer at Osgoode Hall Law School and Toronto Metropolitan University. For four years, she has taught a course on Inclusive Job Design and Psychological Safety for the Osgoode Certificate in Workplace Mental Health Law.



## DASHA PEREGOUDOVA

A unique background as a former national team athlete has helped Dasha Peregoudova build a distinctive labour and employment practice focused on sports law and athlete representation.

The Aird & Berlis lawyer has established herself as a leading voice in Canadian sports law, particularly in advancing athletes' rights and developing policies to create safer sport environments.

"As a former Canadian national team athlete, two-time Pan American champion and long-time athlete advocate and trusted sport advisor, Dasha assists athletes and artists, as well as the organizations that champion them, with a focus on governance," her nomination states.

Peregoudova recently played a key role in representing the Professional Women's Hockey League Players Association during the establishment of North America's first viable professional women's hockey league. Her work helped secure the first collective bargaining agreement for a women's professional sports union before league operations began.

She also serves as labour counsel and executive director for the Canadian Men's National Soccer Team Players Association, advising on unionization, collective bargaining, and negotiations with Canada Soccer.

Beyond her client work, Peregoudova holds significant leadership positions in sports governance. She was appointed Director of Sanctions and Outcomes for Abuse-Free Sport, Canada's independent safe sport mechanism, where she has issued approximately 150 decisions concerning maltreatment in sports.

Her extensive sports governance experience includes serving as Team Canada's Ombudsperson at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and 2019 Pan American Games,



## ALEX KAGAN

A commitment to keeping HR professionals informed about evolving workplace laws has helped Alex Kagan build a reputation as an emerging leader in Canadian employment law.

The Aird & Berlis lawyer has been recognized by The Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in Canada for his expertise in Labour & Employment Law and received the Mondaq Thought Leadership Award in Compliance – Canada, highlighting his growing influence in the field.

Kagan has become a key contributor to his firm's educational offerings for HR professionals, regularly participating in HRPA-accredited webinars that attract more than 2,000 registrants. Recent presentations have addressed remote work policies, accessibility compliance, workplace vaccinations, and best practices for investigations.

"The Workplace Law Group at Aird & Berlis has cemented itself as a thought leader in this space and is considered a source of expertise in the market," notes his nomination. "Alex is a regular contributor to the firm's regular seminars, webinars and legal bulletins to keep clients and the HR community up-to-date."

His writing reaches a substantial audience through the firm's Workplace Law Bulletin, which has more than 12,000 subscribers. Recent articles have covered temporary help agency licensing requirements and accessibility compliance reporting deadlines.

Kagan also contributes to external publications, addressing topics such as termination clause enforceability and cross-border employment relationships.

Beyond educational initiatives, Kagan assists employers in defending employment and labour claims while also working to identify strategic vulnerabilities to resolve issues before litigation.

AWARD-WINNING EMPLOYMENT LAW

# CHAMPIONING FAIRNESS AT WORK



As founder of Marshall Workplace Law, Nathaniel conducts complex investigations nationwide and champions workplace equity. His practice is grounded in meaningful change, inclusive hiring, and community support, including an \$80,000 endowment for Indigenous and Black law students. Nathaniel's vision: a future of work built on fairness and respect.



# MARSHALL WORKPLACE LAW

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## NATHANIEL MARSHALL

A specialized focus on culturally responsive workplace investigations has helped Nathaniel Marshall build a distinctive employment law practice addressing complex discrimination issues.

After gaining experience at prominent employment and labour firms, Marshall founded his own boutique employment law firm in 2022, focusing on workplace investigations, assessments, audits, training, restoration and mediation services.

“Nathaniel is sought out for his expertise in conducting investigations related to applicable human rights legislation, specifically with regard to anti-Black racism,” his nomination states.

His practice spans diverse environments, conducting investigations in organizations ranging from small businesses to large enterprises in both unionized and non-unionized settings. He has worked with clients across sectors including police services, school boards, universities, hospitals, municipalities, and crown corporations.

Marshall brings particular expertise in trauma-informed investigative approaches. In one case involving a police officer’s disability discrimination complaint, he implemented specialized techniques to gather information sensitively, including allowing support persons during interviews and meeting at locations chosen by the complainant.

“Recognizing the many negative effects of workplace conflict—as well as the potential impact of investigations on those involved—he draws on his education, training and experience to help clients navigate complex circumstances with confidence,” his nomination notes.

Beyond investigations, Marshall delivers in-house training and presentations on workplace issues, including one-on-one training for individuals found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct.



## STEVEN LEWIS

A commitment to creating inclusive workplaces that empower people with disabilities has distinguished Steven Lewis as an emerging leader in Canadian employment law.

As Senior Legal Counsel at Capital One, Lewis serves as the sole employment counsel for Canadian operations, managing workplace investigations, terminations, regulatory compliance, and litigation matters while simultaneously driving major accessibility and inclusion initiatives.

“Steven’s contributions have had a measurable and lasting impact across multiple domains,” notes his nomination. “His work continues to inspire innovation, foster inclusion, and set new benchmarks.”

Lewis also contributes significantly to shaping workplace policies at national and international levels. He serves on the federal Accessibility Standards Canada Employment Standards Committee, developing standards under the Accessible Canada Act that support workers while providing frameworks for employers.

In December 2024, his committee published the first section of these Employment Standards, now available for employers across Canada. He also participates in the Global Leadership Counsel for the International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP), a United Nations G3ict initiative, where he has driven improvements in global technology and accessibility.

As Chair of the Capacity and Discipline Committee of the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA), Lewis adjudicates professional misconduct cases, ensuring high regulatory standards for HR professionals.

His accessibility work at Capital One has been impactful. Lewis has led teams across the business to remediate over 4,000 instances of non-conformance, achieving 100% resolution of high and medium severity findings.



## Laura J. Freitag Named to HR Law Canada's 2025 Top Workplace Lawyers Under 40 List.

### Congratulations!

Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP is one of Canada's largest and highest-ranked law firms practicing exclusively management-side labour, employment, and human rights law.

We are delighted to announce that Laura J. Freitag has been named to HR Law Canada's 2025 List of Top Workplace Lawyers Under 40.

This recognition honours early-career legal professionals who are making a significant impact in employment, labour, and human rights law across Canada. Laura's strategic approach to complex workplace issues as well as her litigation and investigations practice have distinguished her early in her career. She serves as a trusted advisor to clients, regularly provides strategic guidance to others at the firm as it relates to litigation and appeals, and she plays an important role in our student recruitment and mentoring program, which fosters the next generation of lawyers at the firm.

At Filion, her contributions strengthen our firm, and we are proud to have her as part of our team. Congratulations, Laura!

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# EMPLOYMENT LAW CASE OF THE YEAR



# WINNER: TIMMINS V. ARTISAN CELLS

A Toronto employment law firm has established a groundbreaking legal argument that could fundamentally change how termination clauses work in Canadian employment contracts.

Whitten & Lublin's innovative approach in the *Timmins v. Artisan Cells* case has been recognized with the Employment Law Case of the Year award for introducing what the court described as "a novel ground for invalidating termination clauses."

The case represents a significant development in Canadian employment law by challenging termination clauses based on contract enforcement methods rather than specific clause wording, which had been the traditional approach in Ontario courts.

"This case exemplifies the pursuit of redefining legal standards and spearheading transformative change in employment law," noted the award submission, highlighting how the case could potentially have the same impact on employment contracts as the precedent-setting *Waksdale* decision.

The legal team advanced the argument that by removing an employee's statutory right to file complaints with the Ministry of Labour and instead mandating civil court proceedings, certain employment contracts effectively violate the Employment Standards Act (ESA).

Justice Callaghan acknowledged in his January 2025 ruling that the argument introduced "far-reaching consequences" that could impact employment contracts across Ontario. The court recognized the approach as "a novel ground for invalidating termination clauses."

The case involved Nicholas Timmins, a former Chief Development Officer at Artisan Cells, who was terminated after 3.5 years of employment. Beyond the innovative legal argument around complaint processes, the court found that the employer had repudiated Timmins' employment agreement by failing to provide his contractual severance entitlements and insisting on an overly broad release.

Instead of receiving his contractually obligated three months' severance, Timmins received only one week's pay with the remainder contingent on signing a comprehensive release that included non-disclosure and non-disparagement clauses.

This behavior led the court to award nine months of common law notice



MARC KITAY, PARTNER AT WHITTEN & LUBLIN

totaling approximately \$457,000.

While Justice Callaghan ultimately decided the case on other grounds, the court specifically noted that the firm's novel argument questioning whether employment contracts could validly oust the ESA complaint process would be left "to another court, on another occasion" given its potentially significant implications.

Whitten & Lublin, with 17 lawyers specializing exclusively in employment law, has built a reputation for taking on precedent-setting cases. The boutique firm serves both employers and employees and has become so respected that other law firms frequently refer clients to them.

According to the nomination, the *Timmins* case demonstrates the firm's "pivotal role in shaping and advancing the evolution of employment law in Canada" by introducing legal arguments that could invalidate certain termination clauses and necessitate new, more robust employment contract structures in the future.

Even though the novel argument wasn't fully adjudicated because the defendant didn't appear to contest it, the court's recognition of the approach has opened the door for this framework to be applied and debated in future cases, potentially transforming how employment contracts are drafted and enforced throughout Canada.



**Congratulations!**

Congratulations to all the Winners  
of the 2025 HR Law Canada Awards

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