HUSCH BLACKWELL

# Kaytlin E. Kopen

**PARTNER**

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**OVERVIEW**

## Kayt represents employers in all stages of their labor and employment needs, from day-to-day advising to complex litigation, constructing practical solutions tailored to their business.

With clients' business goals in mind, Kayt knows that avoiding costly litigation is best done through proactive approaches that keep up with the ever-changing landscape of labor and employment law.

Should litigation become necessary, Kayt has significant trial experience. She has handled and won multiple jury trials, including as the first chair attorney. She has obtained favorable resolutions in proceedings filed in numerous state and federal courts and various administrative agencies.

Kayt's wide-ranging practice includes:

- Defending claims involving Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Family Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act,

*"Kaytlin is a terrific mind that you want to have as your thought partner."*

— Chambers USA 2026

## Industries

Manufacturing
Technology
Transportation

## Services

Class Action Defense
Employment Class & Collective Actions
Employment Litigation Defense
HR Consultation & Training
Labor & Employment
Non-Competes & Restrictive Covenants
OFCCP Compliance
Traditional Labor Relations

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whistleblower laws, and other state and federal employment laws

- Representing employers in arbitrations, collective bargaining and union avoidance techniques before the National Labor Relations Board, National Mediation Board and Illinois Labor Relations Board
- Counseling employers on personnel decisions, wage and hour issues, internal complaints, investigations, background checks, employment contracts, restrictive covenant agreements, reductions in force, and leave and accommodation issues
- Conducting manager trainings and policy audits
- Preparing affirmative action plans and providing ongoing strategic advice for compliance with the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs

Kayt's passion and dedication to her clients provide more than peace of mind; they provide confidence that their business objectives are met, and their employees are well-cared for.

## Case Study

### Conagra Brands

Our team clarified important points of law regarding CBAs in this class action suit.

## Experience

**LITIGATION**

- Won unanimous jury verdict for client as first chair in federal jury trial over First Amendment retaliation claim.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of nationwide employer in class action case alleging violations of state and federal wage and hour laws. Decision was upheld by Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.
- Attained dismissal of lawsuit brought against local government in Illinois alleging discrimination and whistleblower claims.

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## Experience

- Won complete defense verdict for senior care facility against claims of failing to properly accommodate patient's deafness. Judge dismissed four of plaintiff's claims on successful motion for summary judgment; federal jury returned unanimous defense verdict on remaining six claims.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of international agribusiness company in Title VII action alleging race discrimination and retaliation.
- Obtained expeditious summary judgment on Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) interference and retaliation claims in U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey on behalf of global leader in paper products. Plaintiff alleging FMLA violations was shown on social media to have traveled, fraternized and otherwise abused FMLA rights.
- Attained dismissal of lawsuit brought by current employee against leading supplier of technical rubber, plastic and metal products, alleging age discrimination with respect to training and promotional opportunities.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of international tire manufacturer in case alleging race and disability discrimination and retaliation. Decision was upheld by Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

**LABOR**

- Successfully prevented union's attempt to organize flight medics for segment of national air ambulance company.
- Represented one of nation's largest packaged foods companies in arbitration, obtaining total dismissal of complaint alleging violations of collective bargaining agreement.

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## Experience

**COUNSELING**

- Counseled leading energy company in reductions in force impacting hundreds of employees. The reductions required state-by-state analyses of Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) issues, adverse impact analyses, determination of appropriate decisional units, and analyses of legal risks associated with position eliminations.
- Negotiated and prepared employment agreements for top executives at various technology and manufacturing companies.

## Recognition

- *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America*
  - Labor and Employment Law - Management, 2021-2025
  - Litigation - Labor & Employment, 2021-2025
- *Benchmark Litigation*, 40 & Under List, 2024 and 2025
- *Chambers USA*, Labor & Employment, 2026
- Levy Fellows: Fall 2024 Board Development Program

## Education

- J.D., Washington University in St. Louis School of Law
- B.A., Washington University in St. Louis

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## Admissions

- Missouri
- Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit

## Community Leadership

In addition to an active pro bono practice, offering regular employment counseling to nonprofit organizations and representing indigent clients in lawsuits, Kayt dedicates her time and legal talents to the following organizations:

- Hillel at Washington University in St. Louis, Board of Directors, 2023–present
- St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum, Board of Directors, 2022–present
- St. Louis Crisis Nursery, Young Professionals Board, 2020–2024, Chair, 2022–2024
- Humane Society of Missouri, Women's Leadership Council, Steering Committee, 2020–2024
- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, Young Lawyers Division, Executive Committee Member at Large, 2017–2018
- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, Call-A-Lawyer Committee Chair, 2015–2017
- American Bar Association, Young Lawyers Division, Spring Conference – Host Committee Member, 2016

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2025 Benchmark Litigation - 40 & Under List

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