FRANCZEK

WILLIAM POKORNY

Partner

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William Pokorny is a member of the firm's Executive Committee. Bill helps employers and educational institutions achieve their goals in legal disputes with their current and former employees, students, and others in state and federal courts and administrative agencies. Bill has a wide range of litigation experience, particularly in the areas of wage and hour litigation, discrimination and civil rights, employee benefits, faculty tenure disputes, and disability and leave issues.

Bill also helps employers identify, understand, and solve a wide range of legal problems relating to their employees. Bill is particularly versed in all aspects of state and federal law relating to minimum wages, overtime, exemptions, work hours, and wage payment issues. Bill also regularly counsels employers on issues relating to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), disability issues, and accommodations. Bill provides management and employee training on workplace legal issues and conducts workplace investigations and legal audits.

For higher education clients, Bill serves as a trusted adviser on sensitive issues such as faculty tenure, pay equity, and policies and procedures for addressing internal complaints of harassment and sexual misconduct.

Bill joined the firm in February 2006. Previously, he worked at the law firms of Wildman Harrold Allen & Dixon LLP (2003–2006) and McDermott Will & Emery LLP (2001–2003). He is a member of the Chicago, Illinois State, and American Bar Associations.

Education

- J.D., with honors, University of Chicago Law School, 2001
- B.A., *summa cum laude*, Augustana College, 1998

Bar & Court Admissions

- Illinois
- U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Sixth, Seventh and Ninth Circuits
- U.S. District Courts for the Central and Northern Districts of Illinois
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois - Trial Bar
- U.S. District Courts for the Northern and Southern Districts of Indiana
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
- U.S. Supreme Court

Representative Experience

- Won defense verdict for City Colleges of Chicago following five-day jury trial of claim by former faculty member who alleged that he was denied tenure because of his religion
- Obtained summary judgment for the Village of Hoffman Estates in a U.S. District Court lawsuit alleging age and sex discrimination and retaliation
- Obtained summary judgment for utility company in Whistleblower Act lawsuit in DuPage County Circuit Court
- Won summary judgment for medical center in Title VII retaliation lawsuit in U.S. District Court
- Prevailed in AAA arbitration of disability discrimination and various state law claims brought by former sales executive against InnerWorkings, Inc.
- Obtained summary judgment after securing dismissal of class claims for an energy company in a lawsuit alleging that the company violated the Americans with Disabilities Act by demoting allegedly disabled employees for excessive absenteeism
- Obtained dismissal of over 40 related age discrimination charges arising from closure of client's engineering facility
- Successfully defended summary judgment for Morningstar, Inc. in sexual orientation discrimination lawsuit by former employee on appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals
- Won motion to dismiss age discrimination and breach of contract lawsuit filed against Northwestern University by former professor
- Obtained defense verdict for the University of Chicago in a nine-day jury trial in which a former Ph.D. student alleged that the University violated provisions of its student handbook when it

suspended him for inappropriate communications with University administrators

- Won dismissal of six-figure claim for sales commissions by former employee of telecommunications client before the Illinois Department of Labor after four-day evidentiary hearing

Recognition

Bill was recognized as an Illinois Super Lawyer in 2023 by *Super Lawyers Magazine,* and has been recognized as an Illinois Super Lawyer since 2017. In 2014, Bill was named to the annual “40 Under 40” published by Law Bulletin Publishing, which recognizes 40 attorneys under the age of 40 based on nominations by their clients, peers and the legal community.