



## STEPHANIE J. WILLING

Associate

stephanie.willing@maslon.com

Phone: 612.672.8391 | Fax: 612.642.8391

### OVERVIEW

Stephanie Willing regularly counsels clients on a variety of employment law issues, including hiring, disciplining, and terminating employees as well as wage and hour questions. She also advises employers on compliance with local drug testing laws (Minnesota's DATWA) and complying with medical marijuana laws. Additionally, Stephanie represents clients in employment disputes involving wage and hour violations, non-competes, wrongful discharge, and claims of discrimination. She has significant experience helping clients navigate through all stages of the litigation process and across many different forums, including federal and state courts, administrative actions, and privately arbitrated disputes.

Stephanie often presents at conferences and drafts articles to assist employers in complying with employment and labor law standards. She was selected for inclusion on the Minnesota Rising Stars lists in 2017-2019.

Stephanie graduated Order of the Coif from the University of Oregon School of Law and served as managing editor of the Oregon Law Review. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree, *magna cum laude*, in international relations and global business from the University of Southern California.

Prior to joining Maslon, Stephanie practiced at a national labor and employment firm as well as a local boutique litigation firm.

### SELECTED EXPERIENCE

**Employment Litigation.** Stephanie regularly defends employers against discrimination and retaliation claims in the federal and state courts as well as in administrative proceedings. Recent examples include:

- Summary judgment granted based on finding that company was not a place of public accommodation under the ADA, which was affirmed by the Circuit Court of Appeals.
- Summary judgment granted on disability discrimination, gender discrimination, and reprisal claims brought by a 16-year union employee.

### AREAS OF PRACTICE

Labor & Employment

- Counseling Employers
- Defending Employers
- Labor-Management Relations

Litigation

- Business Litigation
- Competitive Practices/Unfair Competition
- Employment Litigation
- Tort & Product Liability

### BAR ADMISSIONS

Minnesota

U.S. District Court

- Minnesota

U.S. Court of Appeals

- Fifth Circuit
- Eighth Circuit

### EDUCATION

University of Oregon School of Law  
J.D., 2012

Honors: Order of the Coif

University of Southern California

B.A., *magna cum laude*, 2009

Majors: International Relations, Global Business

- Summary judgment granted on multi-million dollar product liability and failure to warn claims.
- Summary judgment granted on all six claims of whistleblower, Phipps, MHRA retaliation, MHRA retaliatory harassment, MHRA age discrimination, and claimed FMLA violations; despite multiple claims by 41-year Director of Housekeeping—including that her supposed refusal to testify falsely in a deposition about the Hotel's upkeep led to a \$25mm forced hotel renovation and her termination, which was affirmed by the Circuit Court of Appeals.
- Defense verdict in federal court jury trial, in a case involving a claim of transgender discrimination.
- Summary judgment granted in a case involving claims of defamation, hostile work environment, sexual harassment, retaliation, and breach of contract.
- Initial partial Rule 12 dismissal and summary judgment granted based on no discovery for claims of race discrimination, promissory estoppel, wrongful termination, defamation, negligence, and infliction of emotional distress.

**Trial Experience.** Stephanie assists in trying cases on behalf of companies in both state and federal courts. Most recently, in a jury trial in federal court in Minnesota, Stephanie second-chaired a litigation team that won a defense verdict in a transgender discrimination claim.

**Products Liability/Mass Tort.** Stephanie has represented clients in products liability and mass tort cases involving claims of manufacturing defects, design defects, failure to warn, and premises liability cases involving personal injury and death. Examples include defending manufacturers of asbestos, deep-fryers, and glass bottles.

**Commercial Litigation.** Stephanie represented two Special Litigation Committees (SLCs) for Fortune 500 companies in complex shareholder litigation.

## LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY

- Minnesota State Bar Association
- Hennepin County Bar Association: Board of Directors 2016-present; Finance & Planning Committee 2014-present; New Lawyers Section, Chair 2018-2019
- Minnesota Women Lawyers: Communications Committee Co-Chair 2013-2015; Partner Leadership Council 2016-2018
- Tubman Safety Project: Pro Bono Attorney Volunteer 2013-present
- Domestic Abuse Legal Advocacy Center: Pro Bono Attorney Volunteer

## SELECTED HONORS

- **Recognized on Minnesota Rising Stars list as part of the Super Lawyers® selection process, 2017-2019** (*Minnesota Rising Stars is a designation given to only 2.5 percent of Minnesota attorneys each year, based on a selection process that includes the recommendation of peers in the legal profession.*)

## SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- Using Negotiation and Settlement Skills to Your Tactical Advantage, The 2019 New Lawyer Experience, Minnesota CLE, 2019
- "Social Media Policies: Balancing Employer Needs and Employee Rights," Human Resource Law Boot Camp, National Business Institute, 2018
- "Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace: Marijuana and Other Considerations," Human Resource Law Boot Camp, National Business Institute, 2018
- "Employee Relations: Legal Solutions for Sensitive Workplace Issues," Human Resource Law Boot Camp, National Business Institute, 2018
- "From Water Coolers to Snapchat: Preventing Sexual Harassment and Bullying in a Modern Workplace," MRA Employment Law Update – Minnesota and Federal, 2018
- "Dealing with Drugs (Legal & Illegal) in the Workplace," Winona Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2018
- "Dealing with the Troubled/Troubling Employee," Employment Law: 2017 Comprehensive Guide, 2017

- "Monitoring Employees: Privacy Issues and Employer Risks," *Employment Law: 2017 Comprehensive Guide*, 2017
- "Legislative Update," *South Central Minnesota SHRM*, 2017
- "Comfort Dogs, No Nuts, and Odor-Free Workplaces—The Expansion of 'Reasonable' Accommodations," *Minneapolis Employment Law Briefing*, 2016
- "Wage and Hour Law—Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Clarified," *National Business Institute*, 2016
- "Dealing with Drugs in the Workplace," *Fargo-Moorhead Human Resource Association*, 2016
- "5 Things You Need to Know in 30 Minutes," *Minneapolis Webinar Series*, 2016

#### **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

- "8th Cir.: Janitor Who Failed Strength Test Lacks Disability Claim," *SHRM.com*, 2015
- Published Comment, "Predictable Protection for Mediated State Claims: A Judicial Solution," *90 Or. L. Rev.* 855, 2012