



Mary Claire Chesshire

Partner

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Experience

Ms. Chesshire advises for-profit, nonprofit and governmental entities in all aspects of employee benefits law. Clients served range from sole proprietorships to state governments, and include clients in both established and start up and emerging businesses. Ms. Chesshire's experience includes more than thirty years of service to clients in the employee benefits industry.

Employee Benefits/ERISA

- Tax-qualified retirement plan design and advice - for profit, not-for-profit and state and local government employers
- Review of third party administrator prototype retirement plan documents
- Preparation and review of employee communications pertaining to retirement and welfare benefit plans
- Advice to parties in merger, acquisition and other business transactions regarding employee benefit plan issues
- Welfare benefit plan design, advice and drafting
- Preparation and review of qualified domestic relations orders
- Analysis of potential prohibited transaction issues involving retirement and welfare benefit plan assets
- Preparation of trust documents to fund other post-employment benefits for local governments
- Negotiation of service agreements with third party administrators

Health Care Plans

- Federal and state COBRA compliance pertaining to continuation of employer-provided health care benefits
- Welfare benefit plan design, advice and drafting

ERISA Compliance

- Advice to retirement and welfare plan sponsors in all aspects of ERISA compliance
- Representation of retirement plan sponsors in connection with Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor audits
- Representation of retirement plan sponsors in connection with Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor correction programs
- Successful negotiation of agency penalty reductions
- Interaction with outside auditors of retirement plan financial statements

Executive Compensation

- Design and drafting of nonqualified deferred compensation plans
- Section 409A compliance

Nonprofit Organizations and Associations

- Tax-qualified retirement plan design and advice
- Section 403(b) and 457 plan design and drafting
- Compensation and benefit analysis for avoidance of intermediate sanctions

Employment Issues in Higher Education

- Retirement, welfare and deferred compensation planning and advice
- Compensation and benefit analysis for avoidance of intermediate sanctions

Business & Corporate Law

- Advice to parties in merger, acquisition and other business transactions regarding employee benefit plan issues

General Information

Rankings & Recognitions

- Listed in Baltimore's Legal Elite, 2010 - Baltimore SmartCEO Magazine
- Recognized in *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*, published by Chambers and Partners, 2006-present
- Listed in Maryland *Super Lawyers*, 2007-present
- Listed in *Best Lawyers in America*, 2007-present
- Named "Top Lawyer: The Next Generation," Baltimore Magazine, April 2003

Bar & Professional Associations

- Member: Maryland State Bar Association
- Member: Bar Association of Baltimore City
- Member: National Association of Public Pension Attorneys

Teaching & Select Presentations

- Presenter: 2013 Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants Government and Nonprofit Conference
- Presenter: Whiteford, Taylor & Preston Employment Law Update
- Presenter: Maryland Government Finance Officers Association Summer Meeting
- Lecturer: Stevenson University Paralegal Program (1995-1998)
- Volunteer Trainer: Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations

Boards & Community Service

- Member: Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, Stevenson University (2003-present)
- Member and Secretary: Baltimore Chapter, EWGA (formerly, Executive Women's Golf Association) (2000 - 2002)
- Graduate: Greater Baltimore Committee Leadership Program (2007)

Education

- University of Baltimore School of Law (J.D. 1993)
- Johns Hopkins University (B.S. 1989)

Practice Areas

- Employee Benefits/ERISA
- Employee and Benefit Plans - Health Care
- ERISA Compliance
- Executive Compensation
- Nonprofit Organizations and Associations
- Higher Education
- Employment Issues in Higher Education
- Business and Corporate Law
- ERISA Compliance Administrative Law

Admitted To Practice

- Maryland

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