



**Laurie Sherwood** focuses her practice on life sciences, employment, travel, tourism & hospitality and product liability. For over 25 years, Laurie has successfully represented corporations, employers, manufacturers, and distributors in complex federal and state litigation. She has tried cases to defense verdicts, arbitrated and mediated numerous cases, and engaged in effective law and motion practice.

Laurie's science background lends itself to her life sciences and product liability practice. She has successfully represented manufacturers, distributors, and retailers in litigation involving pharmaceutical products, herbal and dietary supplements/products, medical devices, and other related products. She takes a proactive approach to this litigation and seeks the most effective and beneficial resolution for her clients.

Her employment practice includes handling of EEOC and California Civil Rights Department complaints and litigating discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wrongful termination and other employment claims. Laurie also advises employers on employee discipline and terminations. Her employment successes include motions for summary judgment and negotiating favorable settlements.

Laurie's travel, tourism, & hospitality practice encompasses representation of travel agencies and companies, tour operators, travel insurance companies, and hotels in a wide variety of federal and state court cases ranging from disgruntled travelers to catastrophic injuries. Laurie also advises clients on their various travel documents including waivers/releases, marketing materials and various contracts, and situations in the field. Successes include dismissals, demurrers, motions for summary judgment, and favorable settlements.

Laurie is an active member of the National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF) and previously served as a co-chair of the Labor & Employment Practice Area Committee (PAC).

### REPRESENTATIVE SUCCESSES

- ***Plaintiff v. Fortune 500 Company (confidential)*** – In this wrongful termination and discrimination matter, plaintiff claimed she was wrongfully terminated and suffered discrimination and retaliation due to her disability and associated leave of absence. The employer, however, terminated her for legitimate business reasons completely unrelated to her alleged disability including numerous and repeated work performance deficiencies that persisted despite numerous coaching sessions and feedback. At mediation, the case settled for 3 percent of the initial settlement demand.
- ***Iyere, et al. v. Wise Auto Group*** – In this discrimination, harassment, and wrongful termination case brought by three plaintiffs, Defendant moved to compel arbitration. The appellate court reversed the trial court's order denying the motion and awarding plaintiffs their attorneys' fees, finding that plaintiffs admitted they signed the arbitration agreements. The appellate court also ordered return of the attorneys' fees payment to defendant and severed the matters thus requiring three separate arbitrations.
- ***Bennett v. Various Defendants*** – Motion for summary judgment granted based on a lack of causation in a product liability case involving diet products claimed to cause

### Contact Information

Email: [lsherwood@wfbm.com](mailto:lsherwood@wfbm.com)  
Office: (415) 781-7072  
Fax: (415) 391-6258

### Areas of Practice

- Life Sciences
- Employment
- Product Liability
- Public Entity Representation
- Travel, Tourism and Hospitality
- Trial and Appellate Work

### Education

- University of California College of the Law, San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings), J.D.
- Mount Saint Mary's College, M.S.
- Loyola Marymount University, B.S.

### Admissions

- California
- United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- United States District Court, Eastern, Central, Northern, and Southern Districts of California

multiple injuries including cardiac arrhythmias.

- ***Bey v. City of Richmond*** – Secured a defense verdict in favor of the City of Richmond and the defendant officers in a civil rights/excessive force case following a three-week trial.
- ***Burkhardt v. City of Berkeley*** – Secured a defense verdict on all claims being made against the City, except emotional distress, in which the plaintiff alleged racial and sexual (same sex) harassment and discrimination.
- ***Claimant v. Car Dealership*** – Claimant filed a complaint with the EEOC alleging disability and age discrimination, and a wage and hour claim before the Labor Commissioner. Both were resolved favorably through EEOC mediation before any lawsuit was filed.
- ***Gonzalez v. Various Defendants*** – Dismissal of a drug manufacturer in a personal injury product liability action at the outset of case in response to a planned filing of a demurrer.
- ***Heffel v. The Presley Companies*** – Secured a unanimous defense verdict for client roofer after a six-week jury trial in a case brought by the owner of a large single family home who alleged a variety of construction defects, water intrusion and mold. The jury also awarded our client over \$160,000 in attorneys' fees and costs.
- ***Lawrence v. City of Richmond, et al.*** – Motion for summary judgment granted by state court on plaintiff's racial discrimination and wrongful termination claims in favor of all defendants. Motion for summary judgment granted by federal court as to her section 1983 claim as it was barred by the statute of limitations. Plaintiff alleged racial discrimination, violation of her civil rights (section 1983 claim), and wrongful termination. Both the Ninth Circuit and California Court of Appeal affirmed the trial courts' granting of summary judgment in favor of defendants.
- ***Lhotka v. Geographic Expeditions*** – Successfully negotiated a settlement for a fraction of the original demand in a wrongful death case involving a climb on Mt. Kilimanjaro.
- ***Trigg-Wright v. Various Defendants*** – Dismissal of a drug manufacturer from a wrongful death action relying on an expert declaration filed in support of another defendant's motion for summary judgment.
- ***Pascubello v. Urban Strategies, et al.*** – Motion for summary judgment granted as plaintiff failed to exhaust her administrative remedies under the California Fair Employment Housing Act (FEHA) and the California Tort Claims Act, and defendant SFHA did not employ Ms. Pascubello. Plaintiff alleged hostile environment harassment based on race.
- ***Plaintiff v. Company (confidential)*** – Claimant, who was laid off and then returned to her employment, alleged sexual harassment during both periods of employment, negligent hiring, retaliation, assault & battery, and constructive discharge. Before arbitration, defendants obtained a favorable settlement that was less than 10 percent of the original demand.
- ***Prickett v. Multiple Defendants*** – Complex maritime case involved claims arising from incomplete paraplegia and related decompression injuries plaintiff suffered while filming underwater footage for an advertising video. The case resolved on the second day of jury deliberations to the client's satisfaction.
- ***Remboldt v. Multiple Defendants*** – Motion for summary judgment granted in Contra Costa County Superior Court based on lack of causation in this product liability/toxic exposure case. Plaintiff alleged he suffered from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma as a result of exposure to various toxic chemicals including benzene.
- ***Sarkisyants v. Various Defendants*** – Motion for summary judgment granted in favor of a medical product distributor in personal injury product liability action.
- ***Sweatt v. J.E. Moore*** – Dismissal of subcontractor in construction defect matter.
- ***Tasei Corporation v. Rex Moore*** – Dismissal of subcontractor in multi-million dollar, multi-party complex construction litigation involving the San Joaquin Community College District.
- ***Adekunjo, Demps, and Block v. Housing Authority*** – Summary judgment granted in favor of the Housing Authority in three separate employment discrimination claims

involving a former employee. Appeal by Demps affirmed by the appeals court.

## INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

### Professional Affiliations:

- Bar Association of San Francisco
- Claims & Litigation Management Alliance (CLM)
- Loyola Marymount University Alumni Association Board of Directors, Past President
- Loyola Marymount University Seaver College of Science & Engineering, Executive Advisory Board

### Speaking Engagements:

- Pandemic Litigation Bootcamp: Don't Get Caught With Your Mask Down: Employment Law During COVID-19<sup>2</sup>
- "Let's Talk About Sex, Baby: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace"
- "Litigation and Claims Trends for the Life Sciences Industry: The 2017 Year in Review and Forecast for 2018"
- "Big Brother is Watching: Do Employers Have the Right to Police Employee Off-Duty Conduct?"
- "Employment Practices: What Every Risk Manager Needs to Know"
- "We're Watching You: Privacy In The Workplace"
- "Managing the Challenging: Mental health and Behavioral Travelers"
- "What's Your Travel Scenario?: What Happens When Things Go Wrong"
- "Balancing the Interests of Multiple Carriers in Time on the Risk Cases"
- "Ethics 101 For Insurance Carrier Selected Defense Counsel"
- "Effective Management Tools for Avoiding Litigation"
- "Uppers, Downers and News from Our Courts and the FDA"
- "The Nuts and Bolts of Construction Litigation"
- "What the Tweet?! Collecting and Using Social Media Evidence to Investigate Claims"
- "The Art of the Tender"
- "He Said/She Said: Workplace Harassment & Retaliation – What Every Claims Representative Needs To Know"
- Authored: The Child Care Tax Credit: An Investment in the Future, Hastings International and Comparative Law Review (1991)

## BEYOND THE OFFICE

When away from the office, Laurie enjoys traveling, cooking and reading. She also enjoys politics and sports.

Laurie volunteers for many organizations, including:

- The University of California, Hastings College of the Law, Mock Interview Program, 2000 – Present
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)
- The City of Vallejo, Human Relations Commission

- Loyola Marymount University National Day of Service

## NEWS

- Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Upholds Employer's Right to Require Employees to Arbitrate Their Employment-Related Claims
- Walsworth Obtains Favorable Appellate Ruling: Arbitration Agreements Cannot Be Defeated by the 'I Don't Recall Signing' Defense
- Facing Omicron Surge and Workers' Petitions, Governor Extends COVID-19 Sick Leave
- Walsworth Publishes 2021 Life Sciences Year In Review
- Walsworth Publishes 2020 Life Sciences Year In Review
- Walsworth Publishes 2020 Mid-Year Employment Update
- The US Supreme Court Gives Dreamers Hope
- LGBTQ Landmark Ruling: Gay and Transgender Employees Are Protected Under the Law
- Walsworth Publishes 2019 Life Sciences Year In Review
- Laurie Sherwood Appointed as NAMWOLF Labor & Employment Co-Chair
- Walsworth Publishes 2019 Mid-Year Employment Update
- Walsworth Publishes 2018 Year-End Life Sciences Update
- Employment Arbitration Agreements and the One Year Statute of Limitations for Harassment/Discrimination Claims Survive in California
- Walsworth Partner Laurie Sherwood to Present at 2018 NAMWOLF Annual Conference
- Walsworth Partner Laurie Sherwood to Present at the NAMWOLF Regional Conference
- Walsworth Participates in Food From The Bar Campaign
- U.S. Supreme Court Allows the Use of Class Action Waivers in Employment Arbitration Agreements
- Are You Covered?
- California's Supreme Court Rules on Independent Contractor Classification
- Maintaining a Drug-Free Workplace in a Cannabis State

- Walsworth's Laurie Sherwood to Present on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- Walsworth Partners Attend the NAMWOLF 2018 Business Meeting
- Walsworth Partners Sage Knauff and Laurie Sherwood to Present on Regulating Employee Off-Duty Conduct
- Preparing for Unlikely Travel Emergencies
- Walsworth Publishes 2017 Year-End Employment Update
- Walsworth Publishes 2017 Year-End Life Sciences Update
- Meet the Team Q&A: Laurie Sherwood
- Best Practices in Creating Workplace Harassment Policies
- Walsworth Partners Laurie Sherwood and Mary Watson Fisher to Present on "Big Brother is Watching: Do Employers Have the Right to Police Employee Off-Duty Conduct?"
- Connecticut Supreme Court's Decision Reinforces the Duty of Care for School and Student Travel
- Duty of Care in a Perilous Age
- Protecting the Traveler, and Sometimes the Travel Industry
- United Video Spurs New Interest in Consumer Protection Regulations
- Connecticut Supreme Court's Decision Could Impact the Duty of Care for School and Student Travel
- Walsworth Partners Volunteer for Tourism Cares for Oakland
- It May Be Legal, But Proceed With Caution
- Travelers question whether proposed consumer-friendly initiatives will fizzle under Trump
- Planning for Zika
- Here's what South Florida businesses can do to combat the Zika threat
- Duty to Warn Olympic Travelers about Zika?
- Liability Questions Arise After Florida Alligator Attack
- Disney Reviewing Whether its 'No Swimming' Signs Need Alligator Warning
- New Timing Rule for Constructive Discharge Claims: U.S. Supreme Court Rules that

the Clock Starts to Run at the Time of Resignation

- FCC Issues Ruling Interpreting TCPA and Creating “One Call” Rule
- Independent Contractor or Employee? Uber Faces Class Action Over Alleged Misclassification of its Drivers