

Michael S. Brunet

Principal

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Mike brings a pragmatic approach to his traditional labor practice, helping public and private employers, particularly in the health care sector, develop and maintain long-term strategies to engage their workforces. Hospitals and other employers turn to him because of his reputation for finding creative solutions in challenging negotiations, his knowledge of a wide array of unions and their negotiating tactics and his ability to avoid acrimony and guide clients toward a productive and positive workplace.

Mike assists employers in all aspects of labor relations, from planning for potential union organizing to guidance through the election process, from formulating strategy for collective bargaining to representing employers at the bargaining table, from counseling companies on administering union contracts to arbitrating disputes if necessary.

Mike is a firm believer in close collaboration with clients, thoughtful advance planning, and strategizing responses to potential challenges or disputes. He works with clients on the appropriate level of his involvement, and can help clients negotiate or arbitrate matters on their own if that is strategically or financially the right path. He is cognizant of the costs, financial and otherwise, of litigating disputes, and therefore explores early resolution options with clients where such options make sense.

Services

Labor, Employment & Immigration
Health Care
Labor Advice
Labor & Employment Litigation

Admissions

Washington, 2004
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Washington
U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington
U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of Washington
U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit

That said, Mike is a seasoned litigator, and ably advocates for clients when the need arises. Mike has extensive experience before state and federal courts, arbitrators and administrative agencies (including the National Labor Relations Board, Oregon's Employment Relations Board and Washington's Public Employment Relations Commission).

When not at work, Mike can be found enjoying time with his family and contributing to the slow deterioration of his hearing (with earplugs) at concerts in the area.

Education

J.D., University of Virginia Law School, 2004

B.A., Wesleyan University, Psychology, 2000

Honors & Recognition

The Best Lawyers in America® – Employment Law – Management, 2026

Rising Star, Washington Super Lawyers, 2009-2018

Community Activities

Washington Appleseed

- Board President, 2015-2017
- Secretary, 2013
- Board Member, 2012

News

71 Foster Garvey Attorneys Recognized Among the 2026 Best Lawyers in America; Paul Trincherro Named 'Lawyer of the Year'

8.21.25

Speaking Engagements

"Bargaining in Uncertain Times - Laying the Groundwork for Success," Policy to Practice Educational Series, Session 4

Webinar

6.16.25

"A Comparison of Public Sector Collective Bargaining Statutes in Oregon and Washington and Corresponding Trends in Contract Mediation, Strikes, and Binding Arbitration," LERA 77th Annual Meeting

Speaking Engagement
Seattle, WA, 6.12.25-6.15.25

"Real Life Good (and Bad) Faith," Labor Relations Institute

Speaking Engagement
Yakima, WA, 5.7.25-5.9.25

"Working with Outside Counsel," 48th Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Conference

Speaking Engagement
Tacoma, WA, 4.10.25-4.11.25

"Practical Observations and Lessons Learned from Negotiating during the Pandemic," NW LERA (Labor and Employment Relations Association) 45th Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Conference

Speaking Engagement
Virtual Event, 4.21.22

"Into the Unknown: Court and Arbitration Rulings on COVID," NW LERA (Labor and Employment Relations Association) 45th Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Conference

Speaking Engagement
Virtual Event, 4.21.22

"Defensible Just Cause in a Public Sector Labor Relations Environment," WAPELRA Webinar Series

Speaking Engagement
Virtual Event, 3.25.21

Growing Up Green: Learning How to Blossom in Oregon's Budding Marketplace

Cannabis Business Seminar
Portland, OR, 5.18.17

Legal Alerts

New Proclamation from Governor Inslee Empowers "High-Risk" Employees and Creates New Duties for Washington Employers

4.16.20

Borrowers Beware: Some CARES Act Loans Require a Union Neutrality Pledge

4.1.20

What Requirements Washington Employers Need to Know About State Paid Sick Leave Law
11.21.17

Experience

- Negotiated over 50 collective bargaining agreements for healthcare, housing, port and other local government clients.
- Prevailed in several representation cases, resulting in dismissal or withdrawal of representation petitions.
- Successfully arbitrated termination and contract interpretation grievances.
- Resolved dozens of grievances and claims short of arbitration or trial.