



James F. Vanek

Of Counsel

Chicago

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Jim joined the predecessor to Laner Muchin in 1989, was a partner for the last 30 years and now serves as Of Counsel. He focuses his practice on all aspects of employee benefits law including drafting defined benefit, defined contribution and welfare benefit plans. In addition, Jim serves as counsel to several multiemployer benefit funds and associations.

Jim is a frequent speaker and represents employers in withdrawal liability and delinquency issues for multiemployer plans, benefit plans in IRS and DOL audits and investigations, and businesses in mergers and acquisitions.

Jim is well versed in drafting, amending and terminating qualified plans; IRS and DOL plan audits; analyzing the impact of new legislation; and advising clients on the tax consequences of qualified plans on the employer and plan participants. Upon graduation from law school, he became a staff attorney at an employee benefits consulting firm. Prior to joining the Firm, Jim was associated with a business law firm where he continued to specialize in employee benefits.

Practice Areas

Counseling and Transactional

- Mergers and Acquisitions

Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation

- Affordable Care Act, HIPAA and COBRA Compliance
- Health and Welfare Benefit Plans
- IRS, DOL and PBGC Audit and Correction Counseling
- Multi-Employer / Taft-Hartley Plans
- Retirement Plans

Education

The John Marshall Law School, J.D., 1985

James F. Vanek

HONORS, MEMBERSHIPS, AND PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author of the Illinois Continuing Legal Education Supplement on Employee Benefits and Collective Bargaining
- Member of the Chicago Bar Association
- Member of the International Foundation of Employee Benefits
- Served on the Attorneys Committee for the International Foundation of Employee Benefits
- Served on the Board of Directors of the Ronald McDonald House near Loyola Hospital

Experience

Below are representative samples of the types of matters Jim handles on behalf of Laner Muchin clients:

- ✓ Counseling on business mergers and acquisitions.
- ✓ Counseling Trade Associations with respect to employment law and employee benefit funds.
- ✓ IRS, DOL, PBGC audits and correction counseling.
- ✓ Retirement Plans.
- ✓ Counseling employers with regard to withdrawal liability.
- ✓ Advising Taft/Hartley Boards of Trustees on ERISA and IRS and other benefit-related matters.
- ✓ Extensive experience guiding clients through the IRS and DOL correction programs for plan document failures, operational errors, and fiduciary breaches.
- ✓ Advising clients on health and welfare plan compliance.

St. Louis University, B.S.,
1982

Admissions

Illinois

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- ✓ Providing support during regulatory audits by the IRS and DOL.
- ✓ Advising clients on plan design; drafting of plan documents; negotiating service provider agreements; and handling benefits issues in mergers and acquisitions.
- ✓ Assisting plan sponsors with day-to-day administrative efforts, including benefit claims and appeals, QDRO determinations, and participant communications.

News, Events, and Publications

34 Laner Muchin Attorneys Honored in 2025 Leading Lawyers Publication

02.27.2025

Twenty-Seven Laner Muchin Attorneys Named 2018 *Illinois Leading & Emerging Lawyers*

01.01.2018