


People



Irene Bassel Frick

Office Managing Partner

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vCard

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Irene Bassel Frick serves as the managing partner of Akerman's Tampa office. A trial lawyer with experience in state and federal court, arbitrations, and administrative proceedings, Irene has a multifaceted litigation practice encompassing contractual disputes, class action defense, fiduciary duty claims, ERISA claims, business torts, and non-compete litigation.

In addition to her general commercial litigation experience, Irene has extensive class action experience in the context of contractual and commercial disputes as well as in the employee benefits practice area. Irene also has significant experience in employee benefits litigation in general, including ERISA litigation. Within the context of employee benefits, Irene litigates claims related to retirement income plans such as ESOP or profit-sharing plans and welfare plans, such as life, health, and disability plans. Irene also assists clients in enforcing and defending non-compete disputes in the context of commercial transactions. With regard to her representation of employer groups, Irene assists with the creation and preparation of health plans. She also counsels employers with employer-sponsored benefit plans on a variety of issues, from compliance with ERISA, the Affordable Care Act, and other federal regulations, to internal and external audits conducted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Active in the community, Irene is a past president of the Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers and currently serves as an officer for the Hillsborough County Bar Foundation. Irene was a founding member of the Pearl Society, which provides civil legal assistance to low-income and disadvantaged clients in the Tampa Bay area through Bay Area Legal Services.

Notable Work

Managed Care Litigation: Represented health plans, administrators, insurers, and plan sponsors in hundreds of participating and non-participating provider cases in state and federal courts and in

Areas of Experience

Commercial Disputes
Litigation
Class Action Defense
Commercial Loan Enforcement and Secured Financing Litigation
Construction Litigation and Dispute Resolution
Distressed Property
Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation
Employee Benefits and ERISA Litigation
Financial Services
Fraud and Recovery
Insurance Litigation
Preference and Fraudulent Transfer Litigation
Healthcare Litigation

Education

J.D., University of Florida Levin College of Law, 1998, with honors
B.A., University of Florida, Political Science, 1995, with honors, National Merit Scholar; Phi Beta Kappa Scholar

Admissions

Bars

Florida

Courts

U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida

Related Content

Akerman Sponsors FAHP Annual Conference
December 02, 2024

arbitrations. Provided claims analysis related to disputes regarding level of care, CPT code billing issues, Medicare billing guidelines, Medicaid reimbursement, usual and customary charges, and various fraudulent billing issues.

Class Action: Represented clients in a wide variety of putative class actions across the country with an emphasis in contractual and deceptive trade practices claims.

Commercial Disputes: Represented clients in a wide variety of commercial disputes including contract enforcement, and the prosecution and defense of claims of business torts. She represents corporations, shareholders, and officers and directors in shareholder disputes, with regard to claims of breach of fiduciary duty, wrongful competition, and non-competition agreements. She has litigated the appointment of receivers and prosecuted and defended claims for temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions.

Employee Benefits Claims: Represented clients in the denial of claims for health, life, disability, retirement, and annuity benefits. The majority of these claims arise from group policies issued to an employer and are therefore governed by ERISA. Irene regularly litigates ERISA cases in federal court and general breach of contract claims in state court. Irene also represents employers and employee benefits plans in investigations conducted by the Employee Benefits Security Administration Division of the Department of Labor (DOL). Her knowledge of the obligations of an ERISA plan and an ERISA fiduciary in employee benefits claims has assisted in the defense of DOL investigations.

Fiduciary Duty Claims: Represented employers, plan sponsors, and receivers in prosecuting claims against ERISA fiduciaries and has also defended claims brought by ERISA participants for breach of fiduciary duty. Irene also advises employers in bankruptcies or which are otherwise terminating employee benefit plans in which litigation is anticipated or results in the underfunding and/or termination of an ERISA plan.

Related Professional Experience

- Law Clerk to the Honorable Elizabeth A. Jenkins, United States Magistrate Judge, United States District Court, Middle District of Florida

Published Work and Lectures

- American Conference Institute, 17th Annual National Forum on ERISA Litigation, Panelist, “Hypothetical Scenarios and Practical Guidance for ERISA Practitioners,” November 22, 2019
- The Federal Bar Association, The Tampa Bay Chapter, Speaker, “Staying in the Game: Inclusion Without Boundaries,” June 6, 2019
- The Network of Trial Law Firms Seminar, Speaker, “Ethics: The Lawyer As a Witness,” August 2013
- IMN 3rd Annual Florida Bank & Financial Institutions Special Assets Executive Conference on Real Estate Workouts, Panel Speaker, “Pre-Foreclosure Planning,” February 2013
- The Florida Bar, Lecturer and Contributing Author, “Basic Real Property - Real Estate Litigation,” February 2013
- Akerman’s Employee Benefits Litigation Annual Meeting, Presenter, “ERISA and Social Security,” 2005

Robert Slavkin, Jordan Cohen, and Irene Bassel-Frick to Speak at UnitedHealthcare Webinar
October 23, 2024

Akerman Lawyers Ranked in Florida by *Super Lawyers Magazine*
July 16, 2024

Affiliations

- Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers, President, 2013-2014
- American Bar Foundation, Fellow
- Pearl Society, Founding Member
- Hillsborough County Bar Association, Member
- Justice William Glenn Terrell Inn of Court, Hillsborough County, 2002-2004
- American Bar Association, Member
- Federal Bar Association, Tampa Bay Chapter, Member
- Bay Area Legal Services, Cup of Hope Board Member

Honors and Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers*, 2016-2025, Listed in Florida for Commercial Litigation
- *Super Lawyers* Magazine, 2014-2024, Listed in Florida for Business Litigation
- Hillsborough County Bar Association Trial & Litigation Section, 2024, Michael A. Fogarty Memorial “In the Trenches” Award for Civil Trial Practice
- *Florida Trend’s* Legal Elite, 2023, Listed as a “Notable Managing Partner”
- Florida Association for Women Lawyers, 2016, Recognized as a “Leader in the Law”
- *Florida Trend’s* Legal Elite, 2014-2016, 2018-2020, Listed for Commercial Litigation and Business Law; 2022, Listed for Litigation
- *Florida Trend’s* Legal Elite, 2012, Listed as an “Up & Comer”
- *Tampa Bay Business Journal*, 2010, Recognized as an “Up & Comer”