Tucker Ellis LLP



Michael W. Gaches

Counsel

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Michael Gaches brings nearly two decades of high-level litigation experience to the Tucker Ellis Labor & Employment Group.

Mike represents and provides legal counsel to a wide range of clients, including Fortune 500 companies, international corporations, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations. He defends against virtually all employment- and labor-related claims, including individual and class/collective claims regarding wrongful termination, discrimination, whistleblower retaliation, wage-and-hour violations, trade secret and non-competition and non-solicitation violations, and the breach of collective bargaining agreements. Mike handles all phases of litigation from initial case inception through resolution. He provides expert legal counsel on litigation risk mitigation to company managers and executives and defends management action before state and federal courts, administrative agencies, and in arbitration.

Before joining Tucker Ellis, Mike served more than 18 years as a litigator for the Transportation Security Administration, a component agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. As TSA's Deputy Chief Counsel for Litigation, Mike directed and implemented nationwide strategy across a wide range of areas – including labor and employment, constitutional law, torts, regulatory compliance and enforcement, and cybersecurity. He led a team of nearly 70 attorneys and professional staff responsible for all TSA-related federal court and administrative litigation, as well as labor arbitration.

Previously, as TSA's Assistant Chief Counsel for Employment & Labor Litigation, Mike oversaw more than 30 attorneys and staff defending the agency against claims under numerous employment statutes, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Rehabilitation/Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Federal Labor Standards Act, and the Whistleblower Protection Act. Mike has personally litigated hundreds of cases to resolution as lead counsel.

Mike also served as a federal prosecutor for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, where he handled federal felonies and misdemeanor cases, involving drug, fraud, extortion, assault, and immigration offenses – from initial appearance through trial, sentencing, and appeal.

As an adjunct professor of law at Washington & Lee University, Mike teaches courses in litigation and trial advocacy and frequently speaks at employment law symposia and professional development programs.

Outside the office, Mike and his wife Lauren live near Annapolis, Maryland, with their two children. As a family, they are active participants in the equestrian community and enjoy traveling, good restaurants, and spending time with family and friends.

Education

- University of Baltimore School of Law (J.D., 2008)
- St. Mary's College of Maryland (B.A. in Sociology, 2005)

State Admissions

- Maryland, 2008
- Virginia, 2025
- District of Columbia, 2025

Federal Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- United States District Court, District of Maryland

Service Areas

- Labor & Employment
- Business Litigation
- Class Action Litigation

Experience

- Consistently achieved a favorable resolution rate of 97% or higher per annum in thousands of employment and labor litigation cases across eight consecutive fiscal years, saving the federal government hundreds of millions of dollars and affirming the employment decisions of agency managers
- Executed expert trial strategy and successfully collaborated with Assistant United States Attorneys in obtaining a verdict for the government following a seven-day jury trial involving the testimony of approximately 20 senior executives in a complicated and contentious discrimination and retaliation lawsuit
- Represented the federal government and served as primary counsel for senior government leaders before congressional committees, directly engaging with members of Congress and their staff regarding whistleblower complaints

Publications & Events

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- “Offboarding: Strategies for a Successful Goodbye,” Lorman Live Webinar (December 2025)
- “Hot Topics in Federal Personnel Law: Practice Before the Merit Systems Protection Board,” MSPB Workshop, D.C. Bar (December 2016, December 2019, November 2020, October 2021)
- “Litigation Strategies: How to Win,” Instructor, Department of Housing and Urban Development training course, Department of Justice’s National Advocacy Center (June 2017)
- “MSPB Summit,” Panelist, Federal Circuit Bar Association (May 2017)

Honors

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Awards
  - » DHS Secretary’s Awards for Team Excellence (2024)
  - » DHS Secretary’s Meritorious Service Silver Medal Award (2022)
  - » TSA Administrator’s Mission Focus Honorary Award (2021)

In the Community

- Washington and Lee School of Law, Litigation Immersion Program, Adjunct Professor
- Marlborough Horse Trials, Volunteer