



Peter J. Ennis

Member

Pittsburgh

pennis@cozen.com | (412) 620-6512

Peter J. Ennis represents employers before state and federal courts and agencies involving such claims as sexual harassment, race, sex, age and disability discrimination, wrongful discharge, breaches of covenants not to compete; cases arising under the Fair Labor Standards Act and ERISA, and various types of injunction proceedings. Peter has also handled many labor arbitrations and unfair labor practice charges involving a broad range of contract interpretation and disciplinary issues, including discharges arising from drug and alcohol related offenses, theft, fraud, insubordination and absenteeism.

Peter's practice includes counseling employers on such diverse personnel-related issues as compliance with discrimination laws, hiring, evaluating and discharging employees, drug and alcohol testing, developing record-keeping and personnel policies and employee handbooks, pay practices and employee benefits, negotiating and administering collective bargaining agreements, and health and safety issues. He is also responsible for advising employers of their affirmative action obligations, if any, under federal and state law. In this regard, he has drafted and revised affirmative action obligations and assisted clients in responding to OFCCP audits.

As general outside counsel to two non-profits and special counsel to numerous additional non-profits, Peter has been involved in a wide range of issues, including reviewing and revising corporate by-laws; training board members on fiduciary obligations; drafting and revising employee handbooks and numerous other policies relating to board members, staff and clients; succession planning; responding to government claims of misuse of funds and failure to comply with applicable regulations; real estate acquisition and development; obtaining status as an institute of purely public charity under Pennsylvania law; advising and responding to allegations of sexual abuse against clients; custody issues; and determining "in loco parentis" status.

Upon graduating from law school, he served as a law clerk to Justice Arthur H. Healy of the Supreme Court of Connecticut. He has also been honored by his peers and selected multiple times to the Pennsylvania Super Lawyers® list. Peter also serves as editor-in-chief of Pennsylvania Employment Law Deskbook, which is currently in its Fourth Edition and published by PBI Press.

Experience

Prevailed before the sixth circuit court of appeals which affirmed the district court's dismissal of a claim arising under the false claims act in which the plaintiff sought millions of dollars in damages for alleged false billing by a drug and alcohol treatment center.

Prevailed before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit which affirmed the district court's dismissal of a claim arising under the False Claims Act in which the plaintiff sought millions of dollars in damages for alleged false billing by a drug and alcohol treatment center.

Obtained injunctive relief in state court in Allegheny County against a former employee and his new employer limiting his right to compete against his former employer.

Represented a client in federal court in Orange County, Calif., in which, after a six day trial, he obtained defense verdict in a sales commission case in which the plaintiffs were seeking over \$4 million.

Practice Areas

- Labor & Employment
- Employment Litigation

Education

- New England School of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 1982
- Colgate University, B.A., 1978

Bar Admissions

- Pennsylvania
- West Virginia

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- U.S. District Court -- Western District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court -- Eastern District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court -- Northern District of West Virginia
- U.S. Bankruptcy Court -- Western District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court -- Southern District of West Virginia

Awards & Honors

- Best Lawyers in America 2019-2020
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyers 2019

Clerkships

Justice Arthur H. Healy, Connecticut Supreme Court

Peter J. Ennis

pennis@cozen.com

P: (412) 620-6512 | F: (412) 275-2390

©2019 Cozen O'Connor. All rights reserved.



Obtained summary judgment in state court in Hancock County, W.Va. against an employee who was claiming wrongful discharge and gender discrimination.

Obtained summary judgment in state court in Allegheny County, Pa. in a negligent hiring claim in a case alleging sexual abuse of a minor.

Obtained a temporary restraining order in Blair County, Pa. against a former employee who had threatened the employer barring him from the employer's premises.

Obtained summary judgment in federal court in West Virginia in a case brought by a former employee alleging age, gender and disability discrimination, among other claims.

Prevailed in number labor arbitrations where the union claimed that the employer failed to establish just cause for discharge, violated the collective bargaining agreement by contracting out work, failing to pay cost of living adjustments and other issues.

Analyzed numerous positions to determine whether they qualified as exempt under the fair labor standards act.

Drafted employment agreements for numerous executives of large companies, including those for the CEO, CAO, and COO.

Prevailed in labor arbitration where the union claimed that the employer violated the collective bargaining agreement by ceasing to pay cost of living adjustments.

Analyzed numerous positions to determine whether they qualified as exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Drafted employment agreements for numerous executives of large companies, including those for the CEO, CAO, and COO.

Drafted affirmative action plans, including the required statistical analysis, for an employer with multiple plants around the country.

Provided internal management training on such topics as hiring, professionalism at work, preventing harassment and disciplining employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

Represented a publicly traded waste management company in the sale of substantially all of its assets, valued at approximately \$80 million, to a private equity fund. This complex transaction drew on the experience of the firm's corporate, tax, employee benefits and executive compensation, labor and employment, commercial litigation, real estate, and utilities, energy, and environmental attorneys.