



Brian P. Pezza

Labor & Employment Practice Group Leader

bpezza@lewisrice.com

St. Louis, MO / (314) 444-7656

Edwardsville, IL

Brian Pezza works closely with employers to develop practical, preventive strategies for managing workplace challenges, compliance obligations, and litigation risks.

Brian serves as Practice Group Leader for the Labor & Employment Practice Group at Lewis Rice. He focuses on helping employers stay compliant and avoid legal pitfalls by partnering with executives and HR professionals to reach pragmatic and cost-effective solutions to complex workplace issues.

Medical Leave

Brian's clients rely on him to navigate intricate medical leave scenarios and evaluate reasonable accommodation requests. These matters often involve the intersection of laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act with workplace attendance and conduct policies. Recognizing that each situation is unique, Brian examines the details closely—reviewing FMLA certifications and physician correspondence—and collaborates with HR personnel to develop communication strategies with healthcare providers. When FMLA coverage is exhausted or inapplicable, he helps guide employers through the ADA's interactive process. Over time, this approach strengthens institutional knowledge and improves the efficiency of leave and accommodation management.

Human Resources Counsel

Employment law counseling often extends beyond individual cases. Brian assists employers in maintaining up-to-date handbooks and reviewing job descriptions to ensure proper classification of employees as exempt or non-exempt. He regularly conducts on-site training for management and HR teams on topics such as medical leave, sexual harassment, and affirmative action. When working with unionized employers, Brian takes time to understand organizational priorities and goals, negotiating collective bargaining agreements that reflect management's vision and support productive collaboration throughout the contract term.

Workplace Safety

Brian frequently advises clients in heavy industrial, manufacturing, and construction sectors on workplace safety and health programs. He coordinates crisis communication

Services

- Labor & Employment
- Complex Litigation
- Education
- Design & Luxury

and response strategies, conducts on-site investigations into workplace incidents, and manages responses to OSHA inquiries. His advocacy aims to reduce or eliminate citations, protecting both client resources and reputations.

Employment Litigation

Despite proactive HR practices, litigation can still arise. Brian has represented a wide range of employers—from Fortune 20 corporations and national banks to small businesses and public entities—in state and federal courts, administrative investigations, and government audits. His litigation experience includes defending against lawsuits and discrimination charges across diverse industries and jurisdictions.

Admissions

- First Circuit, U.S. Court of Appeals
 - Eighth Circuit, U.S. Court of Appeals
 - Tenth Circuit, U.S. Court of Appeals
 - District of Massachusetts, U.S. District Court
 - Eastern District of Missouri, U.S. District Court
 - Western District of Missouri, U.S. District Court
 - Northern District of Illinois, U.S. District Court
 - Southern District of Illinois, U.S. District Court
 - District of Kansas, U.S. District Court
 - Missouri Bar
 - Illinois Bar
 - Massachusetts Bar
-

Background

Education

- Boston College Law School (J.D., *cum laude*, 2001)
- Susquehanna University (B.A., English, *summa cum laude*, 1998)

Legal Background

- Associate, Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge, LLP, Boston, MA (2006-2008)
- Associate, Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane, LLP, Quincy, MA (2005)
- Associate, Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault, LLP, Boston, MA (2001-2005)

Professional Affiliations

- Human Resource Management Association of Greater St. Louis
- Society for Human Resource Management
- American Bar Association, Labor and Employment Section and Litigation Section

- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis
- Illinois State Bar Association
- Madison County Bar Association

Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals: First, Eighth, and 10th Circuits
- U.S. District Courts: District of Massachusetts, Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri, Northern and Southern District of Illinois, and District of Kansas
- Missouri Bar
- Illinois Bar
- Massachusetts Bar

Charitable & Civic Activities

- City of Edwardsville, Human Relations Committee (2021-present)
- Board of Directors, Opera Edwardsville (2018-present)
- Vestry, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (2012-2015, 2021-present)
- Edwardsville Rotary Club (2015-present)
- Member, St. Louis Symphony Chorus (2008-present)
- Board of Trustees, Boston's Chorus *Pro Musica* (2006-2009)
- Samaritans of Boston, Human Resources Committee (2004-2008)