



# Melissa K. Atkins

PARTNER

215.665.3146

[melissa.atkins@obermayer.com](mailto:melissa.atkins@obermayer.com)

LOCATED IN

Philadelphia, PA

## MEET MELISSA

*"I enjoy problem solving and welcome the opportunity to face and resolve conflicts."*

— Melissa K. Atkins

Melissa represents employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including employment-related agreements, union negotiations, Act 111 negotiations, grievance hearings, executive compensation, internal investigations, wage and hour matters, employee benefits, as well as employment litigation. Melissa works with municipalities and companies in a wide range of industries including health care, financial services, information technology, universities and secondary schools, manufacturing, and nonprofit organizations.

Melissa is a people person and natural problem solver. She welcomes the opportunity to face and resolve conflicts. Moreover, Melissa became a lawyer because to her, the law is one of the few professions that provide an intense analysis of the past as a roadmap for the important decisions to be made in the present. Melissa believes that clear communication is the key to success. She talks to her clients, listens to their issues, evaluates the problem, and recommends several strategies.

In her free time, Melissa enjoys spending time with her husband and their three children. She is often found relaxing on her front porch or playing tennis. As a former team captain of the University of Miami's basketball team, Melissa is an avid sports fan. She never misses an opportunity to cheer on her favorite Philly teams and her Miami Hurricanes.

## EXPERIENCE

Prior to joining Obermayer, Melissa worked as a Deputy City Solicitor in the Labor and Employment Unit for the City of Philadelphia and in the Employment Law practice group of one of the world's largest publicly traded property and casualty insurance companies, where she maintained a caseload of

complex employment law cases from inception to resolution, representing a wide range of private sector employers in union and non-union workplaces across many industries, including education, health care, construction, industrial and manufacturing.

Melissa gained broad experience in court proceedings, performing all phases of litigation including developing case strategy, conducting discovery, depositions, and witness preparation, and drafting responsive pleadings, motions, and briefs. She was also first chair spokesperson in settlement negotiations. Melissa’s experience includes the following:

- Counsel on Human Resources matters, including performance management and employment termination.
- Research and draft legal memorandum on various employment issues including discrimination, retaliation, and sexual harassment in federal district and circuit courts
- Negotiate, draft, and revise contracts and agreements involving bonus and executive compensation plans, terms and conditions of employment, settlement terms and conditions, and release agreements.
- Analyze and present updates to Healthcare industry clients regarding the Families First Corona Response Act leave policies and OSHA Compliance.
- Successfully negotiated over 110 settlements of employment discrimination claims for clients.
- Three successful Summary Judgment Motions and one successful Third Circuit Appeal for years 2019-2020

## NEWS & INSIGHTS

### [Melissa Atkins to Present at The Women In Law Inclusion & Equity Summit: East](#)

November 17, 2021 by Melissa K. Atkins

### [Melissa Atkins to Present “Take up space, Sis! Navigating Issues of Race and Gender in the Workplace”](#)

September 22, 2021 by Melissa K. Atkins

### [EEOC Authorizes Employers to Offer Small Bribes To Encourage Employee Vaccination](#)

June 11, 2021 by Melissa K. Atkins

## ACTIVITIES & HONORS

Melissa is a frequent presenter at seminars on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the practice of law; and labor and employment topics, including the Family and Medical Leave Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VII and other federal, state and local anti-discrimination, anti-harassment; anti-retaliation and paid leave statutes.

Some of Melissa’s professional accomplishments include:

- Philadelphia Tribune’s Ten People Under 40 to Watch in 2013
- Philadelphia Business Journal’s 25 Young Lawyers on the Rise in 2017

In law school, Melissa was a Merit Scholar. She was also:

- Public Interest Fellow
- Mock Trial Regional Finalist and National Competitor
- Black Law Students Association Vice President

## EDUCATION

Faulkner University, JD

University of Miami, BBA

## ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania

Alabama

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

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## CAPABILITIES

### Labor & Employment

Counseling, Compliance & Training

Employment Litigation

Employment-Related Agreements

Executive Compensation & Employee Benefits

Internal Investigations

Labor Arbitration

Traditional Labor Relations & Collective Bargaining

Wage & Hour

### Industry Focus

Health Care

Individuals & Private Clients

International Businesses

Local Governments & Municipal Authorities

Nonprofit Organizations

Universities & Secondary Schools