

# Casey D. Knapp

## Partner

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Casey Knapp is a partner and vice chair of the firm's Business Law Department, partnering with complex and sophisticated clients to provide business-focused, strategic advice related to the design and implementation of competitive executive compensation and employee benefit programs.

Her clients regularly remark that they appreciate Casey's practical, creative, and business-focused approach.

### Executive Compensation

Casey's work in the executive compensation area includes assisting clients with the design and implementation of equity incentive plans, phantom stock plans, non-qualified deferred compensation plans, and executive employment and severance agreements. She also regularly advises clients on the application of applicable tax rules, including Internal Revenue Code sections 409A and 280G.

*Representative Experience:* Last year, Casey counseled more than 100 privately held companies on the strategic design and implementation of their equity incentive arrangements, phantom stock plans, sophisticated bonus plans, and executive employment agreements. Most of this work has been for private equity portfolio companies in various industries.

### Retirement Plans

Casey's work with qualified retirement plans includes assisting clients with the design and implementation of 401(k) plans, profit sharing plans, and pension plans. She frequently advises clients on complex 401(k) plan issues, including advice related to implementing student loan matching contribution programs, integrating plans following a change in control transaction, addressing issues specific to private equity portfolio companies, tax consequences of contributions to and distributions from employer-sponsored retirement plans, and complying with evolving IRS and DOL regulations and correction programs.

*Representative Experience:* Casey provides continuing, year-after-year employee benefits support to multiple members of the Fortune 50. As part of this work, she provides ongoing weekly support to an aerospace industry client that sponsors one of the largest 401(k) plans in the United States.

## Health & Welfare Plans

Casey's work in the health and welfare space centers around addressing critical issues affecting group health and welfare benefit plans under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, HIPAA, COBRA, ERISA, and Code Sections 125 and 105(h). Casey also advises employers on the complicated welfare plan issues that arise in the context of change in control transactions, including MEWA avoidance, successor employer issues under COBRA, and benefits transition issues.

## Transactions

In addition to her traditional executive compensation and employee benefits work, Casey frequently works with members of the firm's Transactions Practice to advise clients on the executive compensation and employee benefits issues arising in mergers and acquisitions. Casey also provides transactional support directly to clients and other law firms that are based outside of the United States or do not have robust executive compensation and employee benefits teams.

Casey is a member of the firm's Innovative Technology and Health Care & Life Sciences Sector teams, which consist of a cross-disciplinary team of attorneys and professions focused on understanding the impact of innovative technology, including artificial intelligence, and helping clients develop legal strategies for their health care and technology businesses.

## Awards and Recognition

- Recognized in *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business* as a leading Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation Lawyer (2023-2025)
- *Lawyer of the Year* award recipient in the field of Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law (2026)
- Selected by her peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*© in the field of Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law (2023-2026)
- Honored as one of the *Milwaukee Business Journal's* 40 Under 40 Award recipients (2016)

## Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Wisconsin Bar Association
- Milwaukee Bar Association

## Community Involvement

- Casey contributes significant pro bono hours each year to the Milwaukee and Wisconsin communities through her participation in the Wills for Heroes program and other pro bono opportunities.
- Past Chairwoman of the board of directors of Centro Legal, a nonprofit legal services organization that provides important resources for families and survivors of domestic abuse in the Milwaukee

Community.

## **Sectors**

- [Innovative Technology](#)

## **Practice Areas**

- [Corporate](#)
- [Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation](#)
- [Labor & Employment](#)
- [Transactions](#)

## **Education**

- Washington and Lee University School of Law (J.D., magna cum laude)
- Sweet Briar College (B.A., valedictorian)
- Harvard Law School Leadership Training

## **Admissions**

- Illinois
- Wisconsin