

## Akilah F. Craig

Associate

Houston

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## OVERVIEW

Akilah has significant transactional experience drafting complex employment agreements, separation and release agreements, and restrictive covenants, such as non-disclosure, non-competition, and non-solicitation agreements. She also conducts due diligence associated with employment matters in asset and equity transactions and assists with post-transaction employment integration.

In addition, Akilah counsels clients in all aspects of the employment relationship, including hiring, management, retention, and termination of employees. She also advises clients on best practices related to federal and state law wage and hour compliance, defense and pursuit of employment claims, onboarding employees from alleged competitors, responding to and addressing employees' concerns and complaints, and conducting internal investigations.

Akilah's litigation experience includes representing employers in and before federal and state courts and administrative agencies in disputes across the country relating to employment discrimination, employment and restrictive covenant agreements, and wage and hour-related claims.

In addition to representing clients in transactional and litigation matters, Akilah also presents seminars and writes articles on a wide range of employment topics, including state and federal employment law updates, workplace civility, and diversity and inclusion-related issues in the workplace.

## REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Advised a national insurance company on multistate independent contractor compliance issues.
- Advised a multinational employer regarding tailoring international standards and employment policies and agreements for use with a U.S. workforce.
- Led an investigation on behalf of a U.S. subsidiary of an international energy company to investigate an employee complaint regarding a hostile work environment, including conducting witness interviews, analyzing relevant documents, preparing a report on the results of the investigation, and advising company executives regarding proposed next steps.
- Settled a breach of restrictive covenant and trade secret case on terms in favor of an energy services company.

## AWARDS

- Houston Bar Association, President's Award (2024)
- *Daily Journal*, Top Verdicts (2023)
- Franklin & Marshall African American Alumni Council, Sydney N. Bridgett '51 Medal, (2023)
- Houston Bar Foundation, Outstanding Legal Article Award (2023)
- The National Black Lawyers, Top 40 Under 40 in Texas (2020)
- *Super Lawyers® Texas Rising Star* (2015-2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America® Ones to Watch*, Labor and Employment Law – Management (2022-2024)
- The National Bar Association Women Lawyers Division, Outstanding Young Lawyer (2022)

## TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Labor + Employment

## ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Accessible Facilities and Services (ADA Titles II and III)
- Employment Counseling
- Labor + Employment
- Labor + Employment Litigation + Dispute Resolution
- Litigation + Trial
- Noncompete + Trade Secrets
- Wage + Hour Matters

## PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Member, National Employment Law Counsel
- Fellow, Texas Bar Foundation
- Fellow, Houston Young Lawyers Foundation
- Trustee (2016-2024)
- Board of directors (2018-2020)
- Texas Minority Counsel Program Steering Committee
- Chair, Association of Women Attorneys Foundation (2021-2022)
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity; Pathfinder, 2019

## EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

### EDUCATION

- Baylor University School of Law, J.D.
- Franklin & Marshall College, B.A.

### BAR ADMISSIONS

- Texas

## COURT ADMISSIONS

- U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit

## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Speaker, "Lactation Support: Law & Logistics," Houston Bar Association's Gender Fairness Committee & Harris County Law Library CLE, February 25, 2025.
- Speaker, "Legal Issues Employers Face in 2024: What You Need to Know," Locke Lord, February 21, 2024.
- Speaker, "Legal Considerations Regarding Contingent Workers," Locke Lord, February 15, 2023.
- Speaker, "Industry Insider: The Post-Pandemic Legal Landscape," Franklin & Marshall College, October 25, 2022.

## PUBLICATIONS

- Author, "Texas Requires Workplace Violence Prevention Plans for Healthcare Facilities," Locke Lord, February 2024.
- Author, "New Requirement for Texas Employers: Notice for Reporting Workplace Violence or Suspicious Activity," Locke Lord, February 2024.
- Author, "Congress Enacts New Protections for Nursing Employees," Locke Lord, May 2023.
- Author, "Legal Considerations Regarding Contingent Workers," Locke Lord, February 15, 2023.
- Author, "Legal Considerations for Using Artificial Intelligence in Hiring," Locke Lord, October 2022.
- Author, "Employment Law in the Wake of Dobbs," Locke Lord QuickStudy, July 26, 2022.
- Author, "Navigating the New Legal Landscape as a Millennial," *The Houston Lawyer*, May/June 2022.
- Author, "Mandatory Vaccination Policies: Not on Some States' Watch," Locke Lord, February 2022.
- Author, "Texas Legislative Update – Expanded Liability for Workplace Sexual Harassment," Locke Lord, July 2021.
- Author, "EEOC Releases Updated Vaccination Guidance for Employers," Locke Lord QuickStudy, June 4, 2021.

## MEDIA COMMENTARY

- Interviewed, "The CROWN Act: What Is It and How Does It Impact Texas Employers?" Behind the Lines, *The Houston Lawyer* Podcast, October 26, 2023.
- Interviewed, "Monday Mentors with Houston Employment Lawyer Akilah Craig," October 19, 2020.