

David Rutan

Associate

Los Angeles

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Clients trust David to defend them in employment and other complex disputes. He has experience with jury and bench trials, arbitrations, and appeals.

OVERVIEW

David is a litigator and trial attorney who represents clients in labor and employment disputes, class actions, unfair competition, and entertainment disputes. He handles all phases of litigation, including trials and appeals.

David focuses his labor and employment practice on defending clients in a variety of disputes, including cases involving alleged independent contractor misclassification; wrongful termination; harassment; discrimination; wage and hour violations, including single-plaintiff cases, class actions, Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) representative actions, and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) collective actions; and whistleblower cases. He also advises employers on personnel matters, wage and hour issues, and other compliance issues.

David also litigates entertainment industry disputes. He has represented clients in several high-profile, reputation-defining disputes, including matters involving investigations, public relations crises, fraud, and corporate governance issues.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Labor and Employment

- Represented an insurance company in lawsuits brought by former independent contractors alleging misclassification and discrimination.
- Defended an entertainment studio in a dispute about screen credits and pay practices.
- Defended clients in various industries in class actions and PAGA representative actions relating to wage-and-hour claims, including recreational resorts, manufacturers, restaurant chains, and financial services companies.
- Represented a university in a pre-litigation dispute regarding alleged discrimination and retaliation by an employee, conducted investigation into claims, and negotiated mutually beneficial, nonmonetary settlement.
- Member of a trial team defending an insurance company in a case brought by four former independent contractors alleging misclassification, age discrimination, and unpaid wages. After a seven-week jury trial involving approximately 30 witnesses, the trial team obtained a defense verdict.

Trials and Litigation

- As the first-chair attorney in a bench trial, successfully prosecuted a client's claims while defeating counterclaims against a client.
- Defended several high-profile individuals in the entertainment industry against various tort claims that jeopardized their reputations.
- Defended an insurance company in a putative class action arising out of claims handling processes and defeated class allegations at pleading stage.
- Defended an environmental remediation contractor against claims by 265 plaintiffs, totaling more than \$1 billion in alleged damages, in multidistrict litigation in which over 200 depositions were taken concerning a three-million-gallon release of acid mine drainage in Colorado.

AWARDS

- *The Best Lawyers in America® Ones to Watch: Litigation – Labor and Employment* (2025-2026)
- *Daily Journal*, Top Verdicts (2023)

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Labor + Employment
- Litigation + Trial

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Class Action
- Entertainment
- Labor + Employment
- Litigation + Trial

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- University of California, Irvine School of Law, J.D., *cum laude*, 2016, staff editor, *UC Irvine Law Review*
- Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, B.A., *magna cum laude*, 2013

BAR ADMISSIONS

- California

COURT ADMISSIONS

- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, “California Employers Rejoice: California Overhauls Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) With Support From Business and Labor Leaders,” Locke Lord QuickStudy, July 8, 2024.
- Author, “California Strengthens Restrictions on Noncompete Clauses,” Locke Lord, October 2023.