GOLDBERGSEGALLA



clazo@goldbergsegalla.com
646.292.8728
Manhattan

## PRACTICES

Employment and Labor

# Charles A. Lazo

**PARTNER**

## EXPERIENCE

Charles A. Lazo represents employers, insurers, boards and businesses in all aspects of employment law and employment-related litigation. His practice focuses on defending employers and property owners in federal and state courts and before administrative agencies against claims involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wrongful termination, wage and hour disputes, and restrictive covenants. Charles regularly handles matters arising under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), New York State Human Rights Law (NYSHRL), New York City Human Rights Law (NYCHRL), New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (NJLAD), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), New York Labor Law (NYLL), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

Charles has extensive experience managing employment matters from inception through resolution, including conducting fact investigations, drafting pleadings and dispositive motions, managing discovery, preparing clients for interviews, mediations and agency proceedings, and developing litigation strategies tailored to each client's business objectives and risk tolerance. In addition to defending clients in employment litigation and administrative proceedings, he has successfully obtained favorable rulings on dispositive motions – including dismissals of complaints in their entirety. Charles has compelled arbitration in employment disputes and negotiated favorable resolutions by identifying legal and factual deficiencies in claims asserted against his clients. He also has significant experience defending claims involving discrimination and retaliation and regularly represents cooperative and condominium boards in employment and discrimination-related matters.

In addition to his litigation practice, Charles regularly represents employers, cooperative corporations, and property owners before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, New York State Division of Human Rights, New York City Commission on Human Rights, Westchester County Human Rights Commission, New Jersey Division on Civil Rights, and the National Labor Relations Board. He has secured numerous favorable outcomes in administrative proceedings, including dismissals, no probable cause determinations and favorable resolutions through mediation. Charles also advises clients on compliance with federal, state, and local employment laws and counsels employers regarding employee relations issues, workplace investigations, severance and separation agreements, employee handbooks, and workplace policies and procedures. He also has experience handling traditional labor matters, including collective bargaining issues, unfair labor practice charges, and matters arising under the NLRA.

Drawing on his prior experience as an employment practices liability and directors' and officers' claims specialist with a nationally regarded insurance carrier, Charles offers clients a unique perspective on employment litigation and risk management. In that role, he investigated and analyzed insurance coverage issues, managed employment litigation nationwide, developed defense strategies, participated in mediations and settlement negotiations, and worked closely with employers, insurers, brokers and outside counsel.

Prior to entering private practice, Charles served as a fellow in the Office of the General Counsel for the leading commuter rail service serving New York and Connecticut, where he assisted in-house counsel with labor and employment and commercial matters. During law school, he gained additional experience as a legal extern with the National Labor Relations Board and as a law clerk at employment law firms concentrating on wage and hour and

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employment litigation. Prior to pursuing his law degree, Charles maintained and enforced collective bargaining agreements as a union representative with one of New York City's luxury 5-star hotels.

### EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

#### Representative Matters

- Defended a putative wage and hour class action, negotiating an individual settlement after successfully challenging multiple amended pleadings and identifying deficiencies in plaintiff claims
- Successfully compelled arbitration in employment litigation and enforced an arbitration agreement drafted by prior counsel, overcoming challenges to alleged defects in the agreement's language
- Obtained a No Probable Cause determination from the Westchester County Human Rights Commission in a matter alleging disability discrimination, failure to accommodate, and retaliation
- Achieved a favorable individual resolution of a wage-and-hour class action claim by opposing multiple amended complaints, defending a motion to dismiss, and leveraging substantive deficiencies in plaintiff's claims; negotiated settlement for $12,000
- Secured a nominal settlement in a wage-and-hour and pregnancy discrimination matter by leveraging contemporaneous client documentation and undermining plaintiff's damages theory
- Obtained No Probable Cause determinations in two related proceedings before the New York State Division of Human Rights involving allegations of race discrimination and retaliation
- Obtained a No Probable Cause determination before the New York State Division of Human Rights in a matter alleging age discrimination and workplace civility violations against a property owner
- Secured a No Probable Cause determination from the New York City Commission on Human Rights in a matter alleging discrimination and retaliation based on criminal history
- Achieved a No Probable Cause determination before the New York City Commission on Human Rights on behalf of a nonprofit organization defending against discrimination claims brought by a patron
- Obtained a full dismissal of a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York on behalf of a dialysis provider, defeating claims the facility failed to provide transportation accommodations and retaliated against a patient in violation of disability laws
- Secured closure of an EEOC investigation based on a finding of lack of jurisdiction

### HONORS & AWARDS

- New York Metro *Super Lawyers* Rising Stars, 2024-25

## BACKGROUND

### ADMISSIONS

- New York
- New Jersey
- U.S. District Courts for the Eastern and Southern Districts of New York

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### EDUCATION

- St. John's University School of Law, J.D., 2016
  - *American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review*: Associate Managing Editor
  - Excellence in Labor and Employment Law Scholarship
  - Labor Relations and Employment Law Society: Co-Vice President
  - LexisNexis: Student Representative
- Fordham University, Gabelli School of Business, B.S., *cum laude*, 2012

## PUBLICATIONS & EVENTS

### PUBLICATIONS

- "An Oversecured Creditor's Post-Petition Attorneys' Fees: Determined by Federal Law or State Law?" *American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review,* 2015

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### WEBINARS

- "Guidelines for Classifying Independent Contractors and Complying with the New NY FIFA Law," (Co-Presenter), GS Webinar Series, September 18, 2024