

## Karen M. Charlson

Shareholder

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## Focus Areas

Occupational Safety and Health  
Whistleblowing, Compliance and Investigations  
Workplace Violence Prevention and Crisis Response  
Workers' Compensation  
Hiring, Performance Management and Termination  
Discrimination and Harassment

## Overview

Karen Charlson's practice focuses on litigation with concentration in the areas of:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) federal and state plan compliance and litigation
- Wrongful discharge and retaliation/whistleblower defense
- Workers' compensation defense

Karen assists clients with federal and state plan Occupational Safety and Health Administration compliance issues, challenging citations and defending against formal Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) actions. She has experience running investigations and defense of fatality matters and other multiple fatality catastrophic matters involving explosions and building structural issues. She has represented clients in OSHA and workers' compensation matters in the following industries: healthcare, nonprofit social services, retail, public sector, construction, manufacturing, food production, paper production and trucking.

Karen's workers' compensation defense work is primarily with self-insured and high-deductible employers, defending against claims in an administrative setting and retaliation claims in district court. However, she regularly counsels employers on nonlitigated workers' compensation issues including workplace safety, risk management, return-to-work

programs and the interplay of workers' compensation with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

She has handled jury trials, bench trials, administrative hearings, and has appeared before the Minnesota Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals, the National Labor Relations Board, Department of Labor and Industry Administrative Courts in multiple states, and the Federal Occupational Safety & Health Review Board. She also presents and trains employers, insurers/administrators and other lawyers on related topics.

## Professional and Community Affiliations

- Member, Hennepin County Bar Association
- Member, Minnesota State Bar Association
- Member, Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL)
- Board Member and Volunteer, Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid
- Volunteer, NYFS

## Recognition

- Named, The Best Lawyers in America®, 2018-2025
- Named, Rising Star, *Minnesota Law and Politics*, 2002, 2004 and 2007-2009

## Education

J.D., University of Minnesota Law School, 1997, *cum laude*

B.A., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1991

## Bar Admissions

Minnesota

Wisconsin

## Courts

U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota

Tribal Court of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux (Dakota) Community

Wisconsin Supreme Court

Minnesota Supreme Court

## **Publications & Press**

### **OSHA Issues Proposed Rule on Improved Tracking of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses**

*Littler ASAP*

April 4, 2022

### **A Blizzard of Activity from Minnesota OSHA in the New Year**

*Littler ASAP*

January 5, 2022

### **Friday Night Fights – What Just Happened to the OSHA and Federal Contractor Vaccine Mandates?**

*Littler Insight*

December 18, 2021

### **Best Lawyers in America© 2022 Edition Honors More Than 240 Littler Lawyers**

*Littler Press Release*

August 19, 2021

### **OSHA Publishes Updated COVID-19 Guidance in Light of Rising Delta Variant Cases**

*Littler Insight*

August 17, 2021

### **Cal/OSHA Standards Board Passes Revised Emergency Standard Regulation for COVID-19**

*Littler ASAP*

June 17, 2021

### **CDC Issues New Quarantine Period Guidance**

*Littler ASAP*

December 3, 2020

### **CDC Modifies Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Employers**

*Littler ASAP*

November 19, 2020

### **CDC Finds That Cloth Face Masks Provide Personal Protection**

*Littler ASAP*

November 11, 2020

### **Best Lawyers in America© 2021 Edition Honors More Than 250 Littler Lawyers**

*Littler Press Release*

August 20, 2020

**The Next Normal: A Littler Interview with Dr. John Howard, Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health**

*Littler Insight*

May 12, 2020

**Minnesota Update: The Latest COVID-19 Developments Impacting Minnesota Employers**

*Littler Insight*

April 22, 2020

**The Next Normal: A Littler Insight on Returning to Work – Safety and Health**

*Littler Insight*

April 22, 2020

**CDC Updates Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers Exposed to COVID-19**

*Littler ASAP*

April 9, 2020

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Business Preparedness**

*Littler Insight*

March 4, 2020

**Best Lawyers in America© 2020 Edition Honors More Than 200 Littler Lawyers; 14 Named Lawyer of the Year**

*Littler Press Release*

August 15, 2019

**Best Lawyers in America© 2019 Edition Honors More Than 200 Littler Lawyers**

*Littler Press Release*

August 15, 2018

**Best Lawyers in America© 2018 Edition Honors More Than 200 Littler Lawyers**

*Littler Press Release*

August 17, 2017

**Karen M. Charlson Joins Littler's Minneapolis Office Marking the Firm's Continued Lateral Growth**

*Littler Press Release*

October 8, 2012

**OSHA Planning More Nursing Home Inspections Soon**

*Minnesota Employment Law Report*

January 2, 2012

**Bah, Humbug! Are Holiday Injuries Covered By Work Comp?**

*Minnesota Employment Law Report*

December 7, 2011

**Landed Aliens Deserve Work Comp Protection**

*Business Report, Issue No. 15*

Fall 2003

**Speaking Engagements**

**2024 Midwest Regional Employer Conference**

Minneapolis, MN

November 14, 2024

**New Year, New Us! Resolutions for You and Your Organization**

January 25, 2024

**2022 Midwest Regional Employer Conference**

Minneapolis, MN

November 3, 2022

**The Return to Office in Interesting Times - Staying Flexible and Positive to Benefit Your Organization**

Minneapolis, MN

July 21, 2022

**"I'll Take Safety and Health for \$500!" Critical Safety and Health Questions Answered for the Post-Pandemic World – So YOUR Organization Does Not End Up in JEOPARDY!**

Littler Executive Employer Conference

May 5, 2022

**Retail Industry Roundtable**

Littler Executive Employer Conference

May 4, 2022

**The 6th Circuit Lifted the Federal OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) Stay - Now What?**

December 22, 2021

**2021 Upper Midwest Virtual Regional Employer Conference**

Minneapolis, MN

October 20, 2021

**The COVID-19 Testing Conundrum: What Employers Need to Know to Develop an Effective and Lawful Testing Program**

October 7, 2020

**Getting MN Back to Work - Maintaining a Safe Place to Work and Visit**

June 17, 2020

**Getting Back to Work in Minnesota - Lawfully**

May 1, 2020

**The Coronavirus: How Employers Can Manage the Outbreak**

February 4, 2020

**Work Comp, FMLA and ADA: The Bermuda Triangle - Working Within The Vortex**

Twin Cities SHRM Chapter (TCSHRM) Webinar

June 20, 2018

**Minneapolis Healthcare Industry: A Roundtable Discussion**

Minneapolis, MN

October 10, 2017

**Managing Mental Health Issues: The Impact Of The ADAAA , W.C. And FMLA**

Littler Mendelson, Minneapolis, MN

October 11, 2012

**2012 Midwest Employer Conference**

Minneapolis, MN

October 11, 2012

**Who Am I: Consultant, Independent Contractor or Employee? Clearing up blurred identities under the Work Comp vision**

Firm Presentation

2012

**Is the Age 67 Retirement Presumption Still the General Rule? Are we all presumed to be working forever?**

Firm Presentation

2012

**The New Work Comp Legislation & A Dash of OSHA: The Fate of Last Year's Proposed Changes, This Year's Proposed Changes and "Hot" OSHA Issues**

Firm Presentation

2011

**New Work Comp Rules & Proposed Legislation: Some things never change, but the work comp rules have**

Firm Presentation

2010

**The New ADA Amendments and New FMLA Regs: Case Studies to Illustrate the Practical implications for WC Practice**

Workers' Compensation Institute

2009

**Eleven Questions Every Employment Attorney Has About Workers' Comp – Beyond the Basics**

Upper Midwest Employment Law Institute - Minnesota CLE

2009

**Minnesota Legislative Update – Proposed Changes to Work Comp Laws 2008**

Firm Presentation

2008

**Top 10 Ways Employers Inadvertently Increase Workers' Compensation Costs**

Firm Presentation

2008

**We've Received a Report of an Injury at Work...What Should We Do?**

Firm Presentation

2007

**Investigation, Documentation and Technology: Does the Mantra "Document, Document, Document" Need to be Modified?**

Firm Presentation

2007

**General Employment Law Issues for Business Majors**

Bethel College, St. Paul, MN

2007