

# Connie M. Cessante

## Member

**Connie M. Cessante** is a member in Clark Hill's Labor & Employment Practice Group where she routinely advises management on a variety of day-to-day employment issues and litigates employment related claims. Connie is a respected advocate and has defended an array of employment claims under federal and state law, including claims of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, violations of the Family and Medical Leave Act and wage and hour laws, breach of contract, and wrongful discharge. She has appeared before various federal and state courts and administrative agencies within and outside the state of Michigan, including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Through her practice, Connie also counsels employers on all matters relating to the employment relationship, drafts, advises and trains clients on personnel policies, conducts workplace training and performs workplace investigations.

Connie is "AV" rated (the highest rating available) by Martindale-Hubbell Law Firm Directory meaning that she has been recognized by her peers for having the highest competence and ethical standards. As an AV Preeminent® woman lawyer, she was included in the Martindale-Hubbell® Bar Register of Preeminent Women Lawyers in 2011. Since 2009, Connie has been listed in Best Lawyers in America as one of the best labor and management employment lawyers in Michigan. Her other professional recognition includes: Michigan Super Lawyers continuously since 2010; Super Lawyers Business Edition in 2015 and 2013; DBusiness Magazine Top Lawyers 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2013; Leading Lawyers 2014 (a distinction earned by fewer than five percent of all lawyers licensed to practice in the state); Fortune Magazine's 2013 Top Rated Lawyers in the area of labor and employment law; and Hour Detroit Magazine's Top Women Attorneys in Michigan, employment litigation defense, in 2014 and 2016.

Connie is a member of the State Bar of Michigan's Labor and Employment Law Section and American Bar Association's Labor and Employment Law Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities, the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association's Section on Labor & Employment and the Defense Research Institute.

Outside the office, Connie serves on the Ministry Council for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, a nonprofit organization in metropolitan Detroit which provides meals, clothing, substance abuse treatment and other services to those in need. Connie also is a member of the Michigan Women's Foundation, which champions the causes of social justice for women and girls.

After graduation, Connie served as a pre-hearing attorney for the Michigan Court of Appeals and as law clerk to the Honorable Barbara K. Hackett of the United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division. Connie worked as an associate at the law firm of Clark, Hardy, Lewis, Pollard & Page, P.C. between 1990 and 1992. In 1992, she joined Brady Hathaway Brady & Bretz, P.C. and became a shareholder in 1996.

### Presentations

- Absence Management & the Family and Medical Leave Act
- SE MI LE Conference Telecommuting in the Digital Age
- Wrapping Your Arms Around Leave and Absenteeism Issues to Reduce Associated Costs (Co-Presented)
- SE MI LE Conference FMLA and ADA Accommodation Case Study
- SE MI LE Conference Workplace Investigations – The Must Haves
- Webinar: Benefits on Termination and a Leave of Absence
- ICLE: Contributing Author, Wage-Hour and Other Statutory Claims, Employment Litigation in Michigan, Third Edition

### Practices, Industries & Services

Labor & Employment

### Areas of Emphasis

Employee Handbooks/Personnel Policy Manuals  
Employment Counseling  
Employment Litigation  
Employment Training/Seminars  
Employment at Will/Contracts  
Equal Employment Opportunity Law



### Office

Detroit

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### Education

J.D., University of Detroit Mercy  
School of Law, Detroit, Michigan,  
1987

B.S., magna cum laude, University  
of Detroit Mercy, Detroit, Michigan,  
1983

### State Bar Licenses

Michigan

### Court Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals, 6th Circuit  
U.S. District Ct., E.D. of Michigan  
U.S. District Ct., W.D. of Michigan  
U.S. District Ct., N.D. of Indiana

## Memberships

- State Bar of Michigan, Labor & Employment Law Section
- American Bar Association, Labor & Employment Law Section and Committee on Individual Rights and Responsibilities
- Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, Labor & Employment Law Section
- Defense Research Institute
- Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce

## Honors

- Best Lawyers in America (2019 Edition) for Employment Law-Management; Litigation-Labor and Employment

## Presentations

- SE MI LE Conference 2016 Telecommuting in the Digital Age