

Rio J. Gonzalez

Counsel

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OVERVIEW

Rio Gonzalez is counsel in the firm's Labor, Employment, and Workplace Safety practice, where he partners with employers to deliver strategic, business-focused solutions for the complex challenges associated with managing a global and multi-state workforce.

Rio advises multinational employers across the full spectrum of labor and employment issues, including sophisticated workforce initiatives, at times spanning more than 75 jurisdictions. Rio's practice includes counseling publicly traded and private US and multinational companies on global cost-reduction strategies, workplace investigations, and enterprise-wide human capital planning. Rio has particular experience advising clients across a range of industries, including healthcare and biotechnology companies, media outlets, PEOs and EORs, Silicon Valley technology giants, and global hospitality brands.

Additionally, Rio assists international companies on labor and employment matters concerning cross-border mergers and acquisitions. This includes assistance with initial due diligence through post-acquisition employee integration and restructuring. Globally, this also includes advising on consultations with unions and works councils, workforce policy harmonization, and complex employee transfer scenarios.

Rio also defends employers in a wide range of domestic labor and employment disputes before state and federal courts and administrative agencies. Specifically, Rio has defended employers to conclusion in disputes arising under Title VII, the Florida Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Rio also has significant experience litigating misappropriation of trade secret claims and breaches of restrictive covenants, including non-competition and non-solicitation agreements.

Rio maintains an active pro-bono practice, assisting immigration nonprofits in their efforts to secure immigration relief for vulnerable non-citizens.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Rio previously served as a senior associate in international employment for a global law firm. Rio was also previously an associate at the firm, where he provided effective solutions through day-to-day employment counseling on a wide range of issues, including health and safety compliance, employee terminations, incentive

compensation, and restrictive covenant agreements.Additionally, Rio guided employers through the COVID-19 pandemic by offering around-the-clock counsel to address unprecedented employment law challenges and rapidly evolving public health directives.

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- LatinoJustice PRLDF, Lideres Young Professionals Board
- Boston University School of Law Young Alumni Council, Giving Chair
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, Pathfinder and Atlas Award Winner
- Hispanic National Bar Association

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- “The Evolving Employment Landscape: Key Developments and Practical Impact,” Manufacturers Alliance Spring Meeting, 6 May 2026
- “Top 5 Reasons Global Employers Get Sued (and How to Avoid Them),” CLE Webinar, 17 July 2024
- “Bored Yet? Everything You Want to Know About Serving on a Non-Profit Board,” Lavender Law Conference, 25 July 2023
- "Best Workplace Practices for COVID-19 & the Delta Variant: Vaccines, Masks, and Beyond," South Florida Manufacturers Association, 20 August 2021
- "Introduction to Employee Handbooks," National Business Institute, 22 July 2021
- "COVID-19 Legal Landscape and Reopening Guidelines," South Florida Manufacturers Association, 17 September 2020
- "Employer Considerations During the COVID-19 Pandemic," South Florida Manufacturers Association, 27 March 2020

EDUCATION

- J.D., Boston University School of Law, 2017
- B.A., Marist College, 2014

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of Connecticut
- Bar of Florida
- United States District Court for the District of Connecticut

- United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida
- United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida

LANGUAGES

- English
- Spanish

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 15 May 2026, Connecticut Passes Legislation Regulating the Use of AI in Employment Decisions
- 17 February 2022, Student Athletes No More, NLRB Reinstates Scope of NLRA Section 7 to Include "Players at Academic Institutions"
- 10 February 2022, 2021 Health Care Employment Law Year in Review
- 19 November 2021, COVID-19: Florida Curtails Vaccination Mandates for Private Employers
- 5 November 2021, The Wait Is Finally Over: Highly Anticipated OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard Mandates COVID-19 Vaccination or Testing for Larger Employers
- 21 October 2021, K&L Gates Working Wise: Appropriate Costumes vs. Cultural Appropriation: A Halloween Guide for Employers
- 15 October 2021, COVID-19: United States Lifts Certain Travel Restrictions Effective 8 November 2021
- 16 September 2021, Florida Businesses Required to Report Independent Contractor Hires Effective 1 October 2021
- 10 September 2021, COVID-19: President Biden Targets Private Employers and Federal Employees and Contractors in His "Path out of the Pandemic"
- 28 July 2021, COVID-19: Are Masks Back? CDC Reverses, In Part, Guidance for Vaccinated Individuals
- 7 June 2021, SCOTUS Resolves Circuit Split, Limits the Scope of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act
- 18 May 2021, COVID-19: Returning to a Mask-Free Workforce? Not Quite Yet
- 12 May 2021, COVID-19: U.S. Employer Checklist
- 30 March 2021, COVID-19: Shielding Businesses and Health Care Providers Acting in Good Faith, Florida Passes Protections for Civil Liability Relating to COVID-19
- 22 July 2020, Florida Shortens Statute of Limitations for Certain Employment Discrimination Claims
- 29 April 2020, COVID-19: U.S. Employer Checklist: Re-opening Strategies and Return to Work Policies After COVID-19 Outbreak

- 24 March 2020, COVID-19: Premium Processing for Employment Petitions Suspended and Relaxed I-9 Verification Requirements
- 20 February 2020, Prior Version of Form I-9 to Become Obsolete April 30, 2020
- 20 December 2019, H-1B Electronic Registration Process

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- "President Biden Targets Private Employers and Federal Employees and Contractors in His "Path Out of The Pandemic,"" *Pratt's Government Contracting Law Report*, 2021
- "Pandemic Pandemonium: Navigating Employment Considerations in the Face of COVID-19," *Benefits Law Journal*, 2020

NEWS & EVENTS

- 04 October 2021, Florida Businesses Required to Report Independent Contractor Hires Effective 1 October 2021

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Labor, Employment, and Workplace Safety
- Commercial Disputes
- Employment Disputes
- Employment Issues in Business Transactions
- Human Resource Advice and Compliance
- Immigration
- Wage and Hour
- Workplace Safety

INDUSTRIES

- Consumer Goods and Services
- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Media and Entertainment
- Resort, Hospitality, and Leisure

- Technology