

## Penn Payne



Penn Payne serves as a mediator and arbitrator for employment, restrictive covenant and commercial disputes and conducts independent investigations of employee complaints for corporations or their outside counsel.

By temperament and training, Penn is ideally suited to serve in these neutral capacities. Known for her fairness and skill in obtaining the trust of each party, she has cultivated the ability to be open-minded and to analyze all sides of a dispute. She has broad experience in employment and restrictive covenant law, and her proficiency as an arbitrator, mediator and investigator is based on 28 years of litigating disputes for both plaintiffs and defendants and providing sound business judgment and common sense solutions to her clients.

Over the past several years, Penn's expertise has been recognized by her peers through her inclusion in **The Best Lawyers in America**; **Who's Who Legal USA - Management Labour and Employment**; **Who's Who Legal USA – Arbitration**; **Georgia's Legal Elite** published by *Georgia Trend Magazine*; and **The Guide to the Best Attorneys in Georgia** published by *Atlanta Magazine* (as a Georgia "Super Lawyer" in employment litigation and as one of the Top 50 Women Lawyers in the state). Perhaps the recognition that has meant the most to Penn is that several lawyers and law firms, including a nationwide employment law firm, selected her to represent them when they were faced with litigation and threatened litigation themselves.

During her 28 years as an active litigator Penn had broad experience not only in employment litigation but also in general business and commercial litigation, representing parties in antitrust, securities, bankruptcy, UCC and contract cases. Although her employment practice most recently consisted primarily of representing employers, over the years she also represented employees. Her cases involved restrictive covenants (non-compete, non-solicit, trade secrets and confidentiality agreements), employment contracts, stock options and other forms of compensation; sexual and racial harassment; discrimination on the basis of sex, age, race (including reverse race discrimination and affirmative action), national origin, pregnancy, and disability; retaliation; issues unique to governmental employees; the Family and Medical Leave Act; and the Equal Pay Act.

Penn has spoken at numerous continuing legal education programs discussing employment-related topics, including presentations to the Corporate Counsel Institute and to the Georgia Chapter of the American Corporate Counsel Association about methods to facilitate early settlement of disputes

She earned her undergraduate degree from Stanford University and her law degree with honors from Emory University School of Law, where she was elected to the Order of the Coif and taught legal research and writing to first-year students. She was previously a partner at Kirkley & Payne, LLP and Vaughan, Roach, Davis, Birch & Murphy, and was of counsel to Nations, Yates & Toman.

Penn has been active in numerous professional, civic and charitable organizations. The District Judges for the Northern District of Georgia selected her to join the Board of the Federal Defender Program, and she subsequently chaired the Board and was a member of the Executive Committee. She has served on the Boards of the Atlanta Bar Foundation and the Atlanta Bar Association's Labor and Employment Section, the Emory Law School Alumni Council, the State Bar's Rules of Evidence Study Committee, and the City of Atlanta Charter Review Commission,

and she is a Master of the Lamar American Inn of Court and on its Executive Committee. Penn is a dedicated volunteer with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International and has served as an officer and Executive Committee member of the Board of Directors of this \$170,000,000 charitable organization.

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