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James C. Hetlage

Attorney at Law

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James C. Hetlage is an experienced employment attorney, litigator, and municipal attorney. He serves as the City Attorney for the Cities of Brentwood, Glendale, Maplewood, Richmond Heights and Wentzville, Missouri. In that capacity, Jim addresses substantially all of the legal needs of these cities, including preparation and review of ordinances and contracts, analysis of zoning and land use issues, Sunshine Law requests, and personnel matters. Jim also serves as special labor and employment counsel for the Cities of Branson, Cape Girardeau, Crestwood and Festus, Missouri.

Jim represents government and private-sector employers before state and federal administrative agencies, trial courts and appellate courts. He is experienced in resolving employment discrimination claims and other labor and employment disputes in court and through mediation and arbitration. He has addressed the impact of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter for employers and has counseled employers on proper means for avoiding discrimination and harassment claims.

Jim partners with his employer and municipal clients to identify ways to avoid risk and keep his clients out of the courtroom. He provides clients with counseling and guidance on drafting and implementing ordinances, employment policies and on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), wage and hour, and discrimination compliance issues. In addition, he handles litigation involving commercial disputes including breach of contract, condemnation, construction, and real estate matters.

Jim has been consistently recognized by *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers* for his work in Municipal Law and Employment & Labor Law. Additionally, Jim has been selected by his peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® every year since 2015 for his work in Employment Law – Management and more recently in the area of Commercial Litigation. He holds an AV Preeminent® peer rating from Martindale-Hubbell. Jim earned his J.D. from Washington University School of Law.

Primary Practice Areas

- Government & Public Agencies
- Labor & Employment
- Litigation
- Business & Corporate
- Education

Bar Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Eighth Judicial Circuit, 1993
- United States Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit, 2008
- United States District Court, Eastern District of Missouri, 1990
- United States District Court, Western District of Missouri, 2013
- Supreme Court of Missouri, 1989
- Supreme Court of Illinois, 1990

Education & Academic Honors

- J.D., Washington University, 1989
- B.A., English Literature, Kenyon College, 1986

Professional Associations

- American Bar Association, Labor and Employment and Litigation Sections
- The Missouri Bar
- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis

Representative Clients

- City of Wentzville, Missouri
- City of Glendale, Missouri
- City of Brentwood, Missouri
- City of Maplewood, Missouri
- City of Richmond Heights, Missouri
- The Bi-State Development Agency of the Missouri-Illinois Metropolitan District
- St. Louis Public Library

Representative Cases or Transactions

- *Spiegel v. Ferguson-Florissant School District*, Case No. ED109274, , E.D. Mo.
- *Clark v. St. Louis Public Schools*, 2006 WL 208600, E.D. Mo.
- *Wade-Lemee v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, 2005 WL 2333890, E.D. Mo.
- *Davis v. Hammonds*, 103 Fed. Appx. 51, 8th Cir.
- *Darst Webbe Tenant Association Bd. v. St. Louis Housing Authority*, 202 F.Supp.2d 938, E.D. Mo.
- *City of Ladue v. Rafaeli*, 14 S.W.3d 258, Mo. App. E.D

- *Cross v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, 223 F.3d 867, 8th Cir.
- *Wack v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, 25 S.W.3d 689, Mo. App. E.D.
- *FDIC v. Davis*, 167 F.3d 1199, 8th Cir.
- *Miles v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, 989 F. Supp. 1225, U.S. Dist, Ct. E.D. Mo.
- *C.F.S. v. Mahan*, 943 S.W.2d 615, Mo. App. E.D.
- *Warren v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, 200 F.Supp.2d 1053, U.S. Dist, Ct. E.D. Mo.
- *McCurdy v. St. Luke's Episcopal-Presbyterian Hospitals*, 265 S.W.3d 286, Mo. App. E.D.
- *Civil Service Commission of the City of St. Louis v. Board of Alderman of the City of St. Louis*, 92 S.W.3d 785, Mo. App. E.D.
- *Reichert v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, 217 S.W.3d 301, Mo. Supreme Ct.

Lectures and Legal Publications

- Presenter, “Public Sector Labor Negotiations” – Missouri Municipal Attorneys Association Summer Seminar, July 11, 2025
- Presenter, “Personnel Law Updates for Missouri Municipal Employers” – Missouri Municipal League Elected Officials Training, June 12, 2025
- Presenter, “The Family & Medical Leave Act” – Government Finance Officers Association of Missouri, January 8, 2025
- Presenter, “Americans with Disabilities Act and Reasonable Accommodations Under the ADA” – Missouri Municipal Attorneys Association Summer Seminar, July 12, 2024
- Presenter, “Impacts of Legalization of Marijuana for Missouri Employers and Municipalities,” Missouri Bar CLE, January 12, 2023
- Presenter, “Personnel Law Updates for Missouri Municipal Employers,” Missouri Municipal League Elected Officials Training, June 10, 2021
- Presenter, “Personnel Law Updates for Missouri Municipal Employers,” Missouri Municipal League Annual Conference, September 16, 2020
- Panelist, “Impacts of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act),” Missouri Municipal League Webinar, April 2, 2020
- “Recent Developments in the Family and Medical Leave Act,” Leading Age Legal Issues Seminar
- “Fair Labor Standards Act for Public School Districts,” Missouri School Boards Association, Annual Meeting
- “Social Networking Websites in the Workplace; What's Legal' What's Not,” Missouri School Boards' Association Annual Conference
- “Employment Issues Facing Missouri Educators,” Lorman Education Services
- “Drug Testing of Private and Public Employees,” Human Resources Management Association of St. Louis

- "Employment Laws for Missouri School Districts," Missouri Association of School Business Officials Annual Conference
- "Selecting and Terminating Employees," National Business Institute Seminar

Community Service & Awards

- Designated as one of St. Louis' Most Admired Business Leaders, *Small Business Monthly*, January 2026
- Designated as a member of the Top 100 St. Louisans To Know to Succeed in Business, *Small Business Monthly*, 2015
- *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2015 - Present
Employment Law - Management
- *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers*
Employment & Labor Law, 2009 – Present; Municipal Law, 2023
- Martindale-Hubbell, AV Preeminent® Rating

Employment History

- Lashly & Baer, P.C.
Member, 1996 - Present
Associate, 1989 - 1995