



## CHRISTOPHER T. COGNATO

COUNSEL

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### BIOGRAPHY

Christopher T. Cognato counsels and represents clients across a broad range of employment matters. He has experience spanning federal and state matters, arbitration forums, and labor boards. He regularly partners with human resources and other business leaders to navigate myriad workplace issues, including harassment, discrimination, wage and hour compliance, employee leave, and accommodations. He also conducts internal investigations, particularly in matters involving alleged misconduct, workplace culture concerns, and regulatory exposure.

Chris has litigated claims under key employment statutes including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and the National Labor Relations Act. He regularly advises on employment policies, handbooks, and compliance strategies related to hiring, performance management, and terminations.

Chris also guides places of public accommodation through the evolving landscape of ADA compliance. His work includes defending against accessibility-based claims and advising on reasonable modifications, digital access, and standardized testing accommodations.

### COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL

Chris was an extern at **Constitution High School**, a civics and social studies magnet school, and he continues to be actively involved in civics education initiatives.

### EDUCATION

J.D., Villanova University School of Law, 2009

- Managing Editor, *Villanova Law Review*

- Order of the Coif

B.A., University of Notre Dame, *cum laude*, 2005

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### ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania

New Jersey

Third Circuit Court of Appeals

D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals

#### U.S. District Courts:

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

District of New Jersey

He is an active member of the **Devon Preparatory School, University of Notre Dame, and Villanova University School of Law** alumni communities.

He also can be found volunteering his time for any of his three children's schools, little league, and other activities.

## **REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS**

- Counsels clients on various workplace issues, including policy development and disciplinary or termination matters.
- Reviews and drafts executive employment contracts and separation agreements.
- Assists employers in conducting wage and hour audits.
- Provides training on several topics, including prohibited harassment and discrimination, the FMLA, and ADA.
- Counsels various places of public accommodation concerning compliance with the ADA and other accessibility-related laws and regulations.
- Counsels non-profit organizations and provides advice on employment policies, handbooks, and practices.
- Works with startups and small businesses in creating employment policies and employment or independent contractor agreements.

## **Pro Bono Experience**

- Chris's active pro bono practice has included drafting employee handbooks for nonprofits and providing regular counseling on a wide range of employment issues.
- He has assisted indigent immigrants in obtaining employment authorization in the United States and in obtaining refugee or asylee status in the United States.
- He has represented indigent clients in obtaining copies of their birth certificates and with filing change of name petitions.
- Chris has represented veterans in pursuing their claims for benefits before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and in seeking discharge upgrades and special forms of compensation through the Department of Defense.