

Abigail M. Bartine

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DES MOINES OFFICE

A sixth generation Iowan, Abby Bartine is invested in the success of Iowa businesses. In her practice, Abby advises companies on employee benefits with a particular focus on retirement plans, such as employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs).

Her work covers the life cycle of a plan. The process starts with plan design and strategy based on the client’s business needs and employee base. Once plans are in place, Abby works with employers on ongoing plan compliance. That work extends to counseling employers on investigations and audits by the Department of Labor or Internal Revenue Service. Abby also consults on employee benefits issues in the context of corporate transactions. “We’re there for employers every step of the way,” she says.

Her introduction to ERISA came as a legislative aide to former U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin on the Senate’s Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, which helps oversee ERISA. Becoming an ERISA attorney was a little unexpected, though. When Abby started practicing law at a firm in Chicago, she worked as a litigator focused on white-collar defense and compliance. When a senior attorney recruited her to help with ERISA defense issues as a junior lawyer, she found her niche. “It’s very satisfying to work in a highly regulated area of the law because you are able to drill down on specialized issues and become an expert in your field,” she says.

Abby’s earlier work as an ERISA litigator serves her clients well today. “As an ERISA litigator, you see where plans can potentially go wrong and create problems for employers,” she says. “In my current practice, I can help employers avoid in the first place the potential pitfalls I saw come to a head in litigation and, at the same time, address plan fiduciaries’ concerns as they arise.”

For Abby, living and working in Iowa fulfills a long-term plan. “Working in this field is fundamentally about helping Iowa companies grow and continue to operate well into the future,” she says. “That not only helps our business clients, but it also benefits their employees, their communities, and the state as a whole. I feel really passionate about the state and the people of Iowa.”

Outside of the office, Abby enjoys spending time with her family, traveling near and far, and exploring the Des Moines area’s extensive trail system on foot and bike.



PRACTICE AREAS

- [Tax, Estate Planning & Employee Benefits](#)
- [Employee Benefits](#)

EDUCATION

- University of Iowa (B.A. with high distinction, political science)
- University of Iowa College of Law (J.D. with highest distinction)

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Iowa (pending)
- Illinois
- California (inactive)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Partner, Mayer Brown LLP
- Law Clerk, U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- Judicial Intern, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Iowa
- Assistant to the Deputy Staff Director, Office of the Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
- Legislative Correspondent, Office of U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin

RECOGNITION

Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch

Commercial Litigation, 2025

Order of the Coif

Iowa Law Review

Contributing Editor and Student Writer

Van Oosterhout-Baskerville Moot Court Team

Phi Beta Kappa

SPEECHES & PUBLICATIONS

ABA/Bloomberg Law Employee Benefits Law Treatise, Chapter

10: Fiduciary Responsibility (2021)

Securities Investigations: Internal, Civil, and Criminal, Chapter

4: Organizational Sentencing Guidelines, 2d ed. 2016 (co-editor)

"An In-Depth Look at *Montanile v. Bd. of Trustees*," *Employee*

Benefit Adviser, Nov. 12, 2015 (co-author)

"Foreign Bribery Report Issued by OECD," *Mayer Brown Legal*

Update, Dec. 16, 2014 (co-author)

"Contracting for Irreparable Harm," *Law360*, June 2, 2014 (co-author)