

## John P. Mueller

Shareholder

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John is a member of the Professional Liability Department where he focuses his practice on employment law including counseling employers in preventing and defending against whistleblower claims, wrongful termination, sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation claims, as well as advising employers on individual and group termination decisions, leaves of absence, accommodating disabilities, workplace privacy, and employment agreements. Additionally, John provides guidance to employers regarding trade secret and restrictive covenant issues and litigates related claims in Federal and State courts.

John most recently was a name partner in a regional law firm focused on employment and commercial litigation matters. Since 2004, John has represented and advised corporations as outside counsel at the nation's top law firms and served as General Counsel at a mid-sized manufacturing company based in Southern New Jersey. As a litigator, he has tried more than ten cases to verdict over his career.

John brings a deep understanding and sensitivity to the daily challenges and cost considerations companies face. Accordingly, in his role as advisor and advocate, he functions as a virtual extension of clients' in-house legal and human resources teams, working in integrated partnership with them to protect the company's best interests and bottom line.

John is a proud graduate of Milton Hershey School (MHS), a private philanthropic boarding school in Hershey, Pennsylvania, established in 1909 for financially impoverished children. After eight years at MHS, he attended the University of Pennsylvania on a Navy ROTC scholarship and walked-on the NCAA Division I Crew Team, making the Varsity boat. After graduation, John served as an Infantry Officer in the United States Marine Corps and was honorably discharged at the rank of Captain after five years of service, including deployments to Japan and the Middle East.

### Practices

- Employment Law

## Education

- Rutgers Law School (J.D., *with honors*, 2004)
- University of Pennsylvania (B.A., 1996)

## Admissions

- New Jersey, 2004
- Pennsylvania, 2004
- U.S. District Court District of New Jersey, 2004
- U.S. District Court Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 2004
- U.S. District Court Western District of Pennsylvania, 2004
- New York, 2013

## Associations & Memberships

- PennPAC Volunteer Consultant (2021-present)
- National Marine Corps Business Network (2019-present)
- University of Pennsylvania Secondary School Committee (2006-present)
- Milton Hershey School Alumni Association (Lifetime member)

## Classes/Seminars Taught

- “What Employers Need to Know About the Legalization of Recreational Cannabis,” Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, April 2021

## Pro Bono

- Civil Pro Bono Panel for the District of New Jersey

## Community Service

- Program Director, Cherry Hill Girls Travel Basketball League (2017-present)
- Soccer Coach, Cherry Hill Travel Soccer Club (2015-2024)

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## Results

### **Obtained a “No Cause” Verdict in an Employment Case in New Jersey**

We recently obtained a “no cause” verdict in an employment case in the Superior Court of New Jersey. The plaintiff, an employee of a New Jersey State entity, asserted violations of the Contentious Employee Protection Act (CEPA). According to the plaintiff, after reporting purported deficiencies with an environmental permit, he was subject to a retaliatory and hostile work environment. We successfully argued that the plaintiff did not articulate a violation of law or public policy, nor did he prove that the various employment actions he received created a hostile work environment or were even caused by the alleged whistleblowing.

### **Summary Judgment Obtained in Breach of Contract Case**

We secured summary judgment on behalf of a custom-home builder in a breach of contract case. The plaintiffs contracted with our client to build their dream home, but, due to the plaintiffs' change of scope and the increase of costs and services, an attempt was made to modify the parties' contract. The plaintiff objected and submitted the dispute to the parties' chosen arbitrator for a binding decision. The arbitrator fully sided with the builder; however, the plaintiffs moved before the Superior Court of New Jersey to have the arbitration award vacated. Once vacated, we proceeded in the civil action and convinced the court that there were no triable issues of fact to support the plaintiffs' breach of contract action.