



Emma McIlveen

Year of Call: 2016

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Employment and discrimination

Emma McIlveen is regularly instructed by both claimants and respondents across the full range of employment law matters. She has particular expertise in complex and overlapping claims involving whistleblowing, trade union detriment, equal pay and discrimination, including disability, race and victimisation.

Her practice frequently involves cases at the intersection of employment law and public law, regulatory obligations or criminal allegations, requiring careful management of parallel proceedings and heightened standards of procedural fairness. She advises a wide range of clients, including charities, public bodies and churches, particularly in matters concerning governance, discipline, safeguarding, internal decision-making and compliance with equality legislation.

Emma is also experienced in employment disputes raising constitutional and public law issues, including proportionality, procedural fairness and the lawful exercise of statutory powers. In addition to Tribunal litigation, she is regularly instructed in employment-related civil proceedings, including contractual disputes, injunctive relief and professional negligence claims arising from failures to advise on limitation, appeal rights or statutory remedies.

She has represented claimants supported by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in discrimination proceedings before the County Court and is experienced in cases involving significant public interest or policy considerations. Emma has substantial appellate experience in employment law and has acted as sole junior counsel in a number of appeals before the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland. Most recently, she successfully represented the National Farmers' Union in an appeal concerning employment status, securing a favourable outcome on issues of worker classification and contractual reality.

Emma has a specialist interest in sports law and has been appointed to sit on disciplinary and regulatory panels, including the Anti-Discrimination Panel for the Premier League. She has also served as Chair of the Appeals Committee of the Irish Football Association in Northern Ireland, and has represented a number of Irish League football clubs in disciplinary and regulatory matters.

She is the current Vice Chair of the Employment Lawyers Group in Northern Ireland and publishes a monthly employment law newsletter, *McIlveen on Employment*.

Articles

Following her recent attendance of the Dublin medico-legal conference, Emma McIlveen reflects on the unique legal and ethical minefields that the new perk of egg freezing can create for businesses who offer it to their employees.

[View Article](#)

Recommendations

"Excellent discrimination barrister. Hard working, skilful and a great person to instruct." **Instructing solicitor**

"Very driven and successful in everything she does, yet she has a very personable nature and gets on well with clients in every walk of life." **Instructing solicitor**

Academic qualifications

- LLB Law with Politics, 1st Class, Queens University Belfast (Ranked 1st in Class)
- Bar Course, Distinction, IPLS, Belfast (Ranked 1st in Class)

Scholarships

- Kennedy Scholar, Harvard University
- JPB Maxwell Scholarship

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Government Legal Service Civil Counsel Panel (B Panel)
- Coroners Service Counsel Panel (C Panel)
- Vulnerable Witnesses course, Institute of Professional Legal Studies (IPLS)
- Accredited Mediator, Mediation Forum Ireland
- Affiliate member of The Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP)
- Future Leaders Connect, University of Cambridge, funded by British Council
- Advanced Diploma in Applied Employment Law, Republic of Ireland, Honourable Society of King's Inns

Professional bodies

- Vice Chair, Employment Lawyers Group NI
- Member, Public Bar Association Committee
- Legal Chairman, Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal, Northern Ireland
- Member, Independent Appeals Panel for Labour Relations Agency, Northern Ireland
- Legal Member, National Serious Case Panel for The Football Association, GB
- Member, Anti-Discrimination Panel for Premier League, English Football League
- Treasurer, Northern Ireland Medico Legal Society
- Secretary, Immigration Bar Association