

# JacksonLewis



# J. Melissa Woods

(She/Her)

Of Counsel, Charlotte

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## Practices

- National Compliance and Multi-State Solutions
- Employment Litigation
- Higher Education
- Manufacturing
- Education: K-12
- Trials and Appeals

## Education

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication, J.D. 1994
- North Carolina Central University, B.A. 1991

## Admitted to Practice

- 4th Circuit Court of Appeals 2020
- North Carolina - M.D. N.C. 2022
- North Carolina - W.D. N.C. 2016
- North Carolina 1994

Melissa Woods is of counsel in the Charlotte, North Carolina, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. She approaches her work with clients as a true partnership and appreciates their individual knowledge and insights, understanding that a positive legal outcome is most likely if everyone is capitalizing on each other's strengths. She values the relationships she builds with her clients, and they turn to her for her pragmatic way of explaining complicated legal issues.

Melissa focuses her practice on assisting employers with their day-to-day employment law matters, including preventive advice and counseling. She provides comprehensive and strategic legal counsel on compliance issues and regulatory requirements, and regularly drafts, reviews and advises with respect to developing policies, procedures and handbooks.

Melissa also represents clients in all stages of litigation including initial evaluation, research, discovery, depositions, motions practices, negotiations, and trial, with first-chair experience.

Prior to joining Jackson Lewis, Melissa served as a senior associate general counsel for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

## Representative Experience

- Represented the 18th largest school district in the country in an array of federal, state, and administrative legal matters including harassment, discrimination, safety and privacy.
- Defeated, at the motion to dismiss stage, the first claim filed in North Carolina challenging an elected board's authority to conduct virtual learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Prevailed in a declaratory judgment action against a federal advocacy agency claiming unlimited access to confidential records.
- Briefed and successfully argued case to the North Carolina Court of Appeals.

## Pro Bono and Community Involvement

- North Carolina Bar Foundation 4ALL Statewide Service Day, 2022

## Speeches

- "The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: Lessons from the Pandemic and How They Impact Advising Clients," North Carolina School Board Association (August 2022) (presenter)