

# Daily Journal

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## TOP Labor & Employment Lawyers 2024



**Chambord  
Benton-Hayes**

Benton Employment Law  
Oakland

**B**enton-Hayes specializes in plaintiff-side workplace discrimination and harassment cases, with a focus on advocating for employees who have been wrongfully terminated or retaliated against due to their race, gender, disability, or LGBTQ+ identity.

She represents a transgender individual in a wrongful termination

case involving pronoun recognition and medical leave issues. *Davis v. Kaiser Permanente Medical Group*, 34-2022-003165509-CU-WT-GDS, (Sac. Super. Ct., filed Mar. 07, 2022).

“My client was working at Kaiser in the call center, and she had some time where she was out on medical leave, but she was calling in every day to keep her job. They fired her while she was on medical leave even though she was notifying them that she needed accommodation,” Benton-Hayes said.

The client was given a last-chance agreement, which was riddled with errors, calling her both “he” and “she” even though her manager and her whole team were aware that she was transgender.

“I think that this is a very important case given the times we’re in and the understanding of individuals’ ability to identify their gender and understanding gender non-conformity,” the lawyer said.

Benton-Hayes was at the forefront of the #MeToo movement, helping employers prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. As

one of the fewer African American women-owned law practices in California, she said she brings a unique perspective to cases. She regularly speaks across the nation on cutting-edge topics such as the use of artificial intelligence in the employment context, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, and diversity, equity and inclusion.

As past president and executive board member of Black Women Lawyers of Northern California, she has spearheaded collaborations on issues crucial to Black women, including pandemic response, mental health and police brutality.

In her role as co-chair of Continuing Legal Education for Bar Association San Francisco’s Small Firm and Solo Committee, she works to ensure attorneys have access to top-notch educational programming. She also mentors undergraduates and law students on a range of issues from resume writing to how to be a good litigator.

— DOUGLAS SAUNDERS