



MICHAEL A.  
**WATT\***  
PARTNER

\* Professional Law Corporation

## BIOGRAPHY

Michael Watt is the leader of the firm's Labour + Employment Practice. His practice involves providing time sensitive legal advice to both businesses and employees in the areas of labour, employment, workers compensation and human rights laws.

He and the members of the practice group assist clients defending and prosecuting claims through the court and administrative tribunal processes, as necessary. Clients include local and international businesses, not for profits, healthcare employers, government entities and individuals seeking advice on workplace issues.

Michael regularly writes articles and speaks to client and industry groups on topics related to workplace issues. A list of Michael's recent articles and presentations is set out below.

Michael is also a member of the firm's Business Disputes Practice where he uses his experience to assist clients involved in employment related disputes related to enforcement of restrictive covenants and fiduciary duties for protection of a business.

## ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Michael was born in Montreal, Quebec and grew up in Toronto, Ontario. He graduated in 1983 from St. George's School in Vancouver. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1986 from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of British Columbia in 1990. He was called to the Bar of British Columbia in 1991. Prior to joining

EMAIL [mwatt@ahbl.ca](mailto:mwatt@ahbl.ca)  
TEL 604 484 1733  
FAX 604 484 9733

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## EDUCATION

- LL.B. [University of British Columbia](#)
- B.A. [Queen's University](#)

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## BAR ADMISSIONS

- Admitted to the British Columbia Bar

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## PRACTICE AREAS

### BUSINESS

- Business Disputes
- Labour Relations
- Employment Law
- Workers Compensation

### PERSONAL

- Employment
- Human Rights

Alexander Holburn in 2000, he had articulated, practiced and was a partner at Douglas Symes & Brissenden in Vancouver.

## RECOGNITION

- 2012 - Present, Martindale-Hubbell® Labour and Employment and Commercial Litigation Distinguished® with high ethical standing

## REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Preparing and implementing employment contracts, restrictive covenants and employee policy handbooks
- Advising businesses and individuals on employee terminations
- Acting for clients enforcing restrictive covenants and protecting against misuse of confidential information
- Advising businesses on rights and obligations related to employee performance issues and employee disability
- Advising on employment standards obligations and compliance
- Assisting businesses with occupational health and safety compliance
- Advising businesses on human rights obligations related to employees and defending complaints made to the Human Rights Tribunal
- Assisting businesses with trade union representation including opposing certification applications
- Assisting unionized businesses with collective agreement negotiation and administration, and grievance arbitrations
- Planning, negotiating and documenting labour and employment issues arising from corporate transactions

## RECENT DECISIONS

- *VDC Dance Centre Society v. International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists And Allied Crafts of The United States and Canada, Local No. 118*, 2023 BCLRB 190
- *Bon Macaron Patisserie Ltd. v United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union, Local 2009*, 2023 BCLRB 139
- *Linza v. Metric Modular et al*, 2023 BCSC 1196

## INSURANCE

- Employment Practices
  - Human Rights
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## INDUSTRIES

- Accounting
  - Cannabis
  - Education
  - Hospitality
  - Real Estate
  - Retail + Wholesale
  - Construction
  - Charities + Non-Profit
  - Banking + Finance
  - Environmental
  - Health Care
  - Life Sciences
  - Property Management
  - Technology
  - Transportation + Logistics
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- *Certain Employees of Grounds for Coffee Inc. v Grounds for Coffee Inc.*, 2023 BCLRB 117
- *Re: Triple M Housing Ltd. and Triple M Modular Limited Partnership*, 2022 BCEST 46
- *Tosen v. Loblaw Companies Limited et al*, BCSC VER-S-S-57263, Oral Reasons for Judgment February 18, 2022
- *BL, WCB Penalty review*, January 22, 2021
- *B. v. BADB Ltd.*, WCB s.152 decision February 7, 2019 / WCAT October 25, 2019
- *H. v. SES Inc. and TT Ltd.*, WCB s.152 decision October 8, 2018
- *Smyth v. Loblaw Companies Limited*, 2017 BCHRT 73
- *Sleath obo others v. Shoppers Drug Mart*, 2016 BCHRT 72
- *Simpkin v. Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Board (No.3)*, 2016 BCHRT 56
- *Simpkin v. Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Board (No.2)*, 2015 BCHRT 129
- *PSAC – and – Skookum Jim Friendship Centre*, 2015 CIRB 784
- *Simpkin v. Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Board*, 2014 BCHRT 255
- *Certain Employees of Sidhu & Sons Nursery Ltd., et al and United Food and Commercial Workers Union*, Local 1518, BCLRB No. B56/2014
- *Anderson v. Intercity Equity Corp.*, 2013 BCHRTD No. 161
- *Mathison v. Arpeg Holdings and others*, 2012 BCHRT 179
- *Certain Employees of Sidhu & Sons Nursery Ltd., et al and United Food and Commercial Workers Union*, Local 1518, BCLRB No. B26/2013 (Leave for Reconsideration of BCLRB No. B28/2012)
- *Danielisz v. Hercules Forwarding Inc.*, 2012 BCSC 1155 (CanLII)
- *Certispec Services Inc. and International Longshore and Warehouse Union*, Local 500, 2011 CIRB LD 2699
- *Sidhu & Sons Nursery Ltd. – and – United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, Local 1518 – and – Western Agriculture Labour Initiative (WALI) and British Columbia Agriculture Council (BCAC)*, BCLRB No. B26/2010
- *Sidhu & Sons Nursery Ltd. – and – United Food and Commercial Workers International Union*, Local 1518, BCLRB No. B159/2010



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## PUBLICATIONS

- October 18, 2023 – WorkSafeBC Compliance Issues, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- May 31, 2023 – Employment Contracts, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- April 5, 2023 – Workplace Investigations Update, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- December 14, 2022 “Milestones: Major Caselaw and Legislative Developments”, *Lancaster House’s Vancouver Labour Arbitration and Policy Conference*, Panelist
- November 16th, 2022 “Year in Review for 2022”, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- September 21, 2022, “Hiring Foreign Workers”, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- May 13, 2022, “Hiring and Firing – Update on Best Practices”, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- April 27, 2022, “Getting off on the Right Foot, and What To Do When the Shoe No Longer Fits”, *CPHR BC & Yukon HR Conference & Expo*, Speaker
- April 14, 2022, “B.C. plans to make it easier for workplaces to unionize”, *Canadian Lawyer Magazine*, Quoted
- March 4, 2021, “COVID-19 and the Workplace”, *BC Podiatric Medical Association (BCPMA)*, Speaker
- February 24, 2021, “COVID Continued”, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- September 23, 2020, “Employment Law Update: Return to ‘Normal’ Operations and Ongoing Lessons from COVID”, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- May 22, 2020, “COVID Employment Update – Reopening Clinic Operations”, *BC Podiatric Medical Association (BCPMA)*, Speaker
- May 13, 2020, “COVID-19 Road to Recovery: From Isolation to Return to Work”, *AHBL Webinar*, Speaker
- May 8, 2019, “Workplace Investigations – Best Practices”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- February 27, 2019, “Hiring Foreign Workers – Available Work Permit and Immigration Programs, and Employment Risks”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- September 28, 2018, “Addiction and Substance Abuse Issues in the Workplace”, *Podiatric Association*, Speaker
- September 26, 2018, “Managing Employee Absenteeism”, *AHBL Lunch n’*



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*Learn Seminar, Speaker*

- May 30, 2018, “Reconsidering Consideration in the Employment Law Context”, *AHBL Business Law Blog*, Co-author
- April 11, 2018, “Sexual Harassment – #MeToo and the Workplace”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- May 17, 2017, “Duty to Accommodate in the Workplace”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- May 5, 2017, “Weed at Work: Risk for Employers”, *Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA) – Construction Leadership Forum*, Speaker
- November 4, 2016, “Legal Update 2016: Employment Law for Your Medical Practice”, *BC Podiatric Medical Association*, Speaker
- October 2016, “Fight Against Gender-Based Wage Discrimination is Far From Won”, *Business in Vancouver*, Author
- April 2016, “Privacy at Work and Dealing with Employee Personal Information”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- May 27, 2015, “Employment termination planning”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- November 4, 2014, “Recent Human Rights Cases of Interest”, *CBA Human Rights Section*, Speaker
- November 5, 2014, “Sale and Acquisition: Update on Best Practices for Dealing with Employees”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- May 28, 2014, “Pregnancy/Parental Leaves and Return to Work – Satisfying Statutory Obligations”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- May 8, 2014, “Recent Human Rights Cases of Interest for Employment Lawyers”, *Employment Law CLE Conference*, Speaker
- April 23, 2014, “Discipline – Conducting Effective Employment Investigations”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker
- November 21, 2013, “Complying with Key Components of the BC Employment Standards Act and Regulations” *Federated Press 7<sup>th</sup> HR Legal Risks Course* (Vancouver), Speaker
- October 2, 2012, “Managing in a Unionized Environment: A Legal Perspective”, *BC HRMA Seminar* (Burnaby), Speaker
- June 19, 2012, “How the new Rules of Court have Affected Employment Litigation”, *Employee Terminations Insight Conference*, Speaker



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- May 24, 2012, “Managing in a Unionized Environment”, *BC HRMA Seminar* (Kamloops), Speaker
- May 13, 2012, “Employment Litigation and the New Civil Rules”, *Employment Law CLE Conference*, Speaker
- March/April 2012, “Working Notice: Is it so Complicated?”, *Employment Law CLE Conference and CBA Employment Law Subsection Luncheon*, Speaker
- January 2012, “Employment Law Update”, *BC Legal Administrators Association Luncheon*, Speaker
- December 2, 2011, “Management Rights in a Unionized Environment”, *BC HRMA Webinar*, Speaker
- August 29, 2011, “Managing your Duty to Accommodate – Educating and Working with Front-Line Supervisors”, *Infonex Conference* (Calgary), Speaker
- April 2011, “Employment Law for Managers – The Importance of Documentation in all Aspects of the Employment Relationship”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar*, Speaker

## EVENTS

- 22/11/2023, Labour + Employment Webinar: Year in Review for 2023
- 18/10/2023, Labour + Employment Webinar: WorkSafeBC Compliance Issues
- 31/05/2023, Labour + Employment Webinar: Employment Contracts
- 05/04/2023, Labour + Employment Webinar: Workplace Investigations Update
- 14/12/2022, Lancaster House’s Vancouver Labour Arbitration and Policy Conference
- 16/11/2022, Labour + Employment Webinar: Year in Review for 2022
- 21/09/2022, Labour + Employment Webinar: Hiring Foreign Workers
- 11/05/2022, Labour + Employment Webinar: Hiring and Firing – Update on Best Practices
- 26/04/2022, CPHR BC & Yukon: Virtual HR Conference & Expo 2022
- 09/02/2022, Labour + Employment Webinar: Keeping Current with Legislative Updates and COVID-19 Orders



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- 22/09/2021, Labour + Employment Webinar: Business Protection
- 05/05/2021, Labour + Employment Webinar: Workplace Reorganization
- 23/09/2020, Employment Law Update: Return to 'Normal' Operations and Ongoing Lessons from Covid
- 13/05/2020, COVID-19 Road to Recovery: From Isolation to Return to Work
- 08/05/2019, Labour + Employment Seminar: Workplace Investigations
- 27/02/2019, Labour + Employment Seminar: Hiring Foreign Workers
- 26/09/2018, Labour + Employment Seminar: Managing Employee Absenteeism
- 11/04/2018, Labour + Employment Seminar: #MeToo and the Workplace

## PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- [Law Society of British Columbia](#), Member
- [Vancouver Bar Association](#), Member
- [Canadian Bar Association, British Columbia Branch](#) (Labour, Employment, Human Rights and Civil Litigation subsections), Member
- [Canadian Bar Association \(National Labour and Employment Subsection\)](#), Past Executive Member
- [Canadian Association of Counsel to Employers \(CACE\)](#), Member
- [CPHR \(British Columbia + Yukon\)](#), Firm Membership
- [The Vancouver Club](#), Member
- [Royal Vancouver Yacht Club](#), Associate Member
- [St. George's School Foundation Board](#), Past Member
- [Georgians Alumni Association \(St. George's School\)](#), Past President (2012 – 2013)
- [Kerrisdale Little League](#), Board Member (Head of Umpires) (2007 – 2010)
- [Kerrisdale Soccer](#), Coach (2007 – 2010)
- [Vancouver Thunderbird Minor Hockey Association](#), Assistant Coach (2007 – 2009)



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