



Kristen E. Smith

Member

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Profile

Kristen is co-chair of the firm's municipalities practice. Kristen learned to navigate the legal complexities and challenges that are unique to municipalities in New York State from first-hand experience. She served as Corporation Counsel for the City of Syracuse and returned to Bond to advise municipalities and other public entities as outside counsel.

Kristen joined Bond in 2005 as a labor and employment lawyer. In 2018 she was appointed Corporation Counsel by Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh, where she served for four years. Kristen returned to Bond in 2022.

As Corporation Counsel, Kristen oversaw all legal affairs for the city, supervising a law department of 18 attorneys. She directly advised the Mayor, Common Council and department heads (including police and fire chiefs) on wide ranging legal issues, including those arising under the New York General Municipal Law, Public Officers Law, Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), Executive Law, Taylor Law, Civil Service Law and Civil Rights Law. She negotiated the city's acquisition of its street-light network as well as the city's first 5G license agreement with a major national telecommunications firm, helping Syracuse earn its designation as New York's Flagship Smart City. She also made significant contributions to police-reform initiatives, including the revision of policing policies on use of force and body-worn cameras.

As the head of the law department, Kristen implemented major staffing, organizational and performance improvements to the department and improved responsiveness and efficiency of its Freedom of Information Law process.

At Bond, in addition to her labor and employment law practice, Kristen serves as outside counsel to municipalities and other public entities, providing practical day-to-day advice, representing them in compliance investigations and defending employment or municipal law litigation.

Honors & Affiliations

- Listed in:
 - *New York Super Lawyers®*, Upstate New York Rising Star, Employment and Labor, 2015-2016
- Onondaga County Bar Association
- Justinian Honorary Law Society

Education

- Syracuse University College of Law (J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2005)
- Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations (B.S. 1996)

Bar/Court Admissions

- New York

Practices

- Government and Regulatory Affairs
- Labor and Employment
- Municipalities
- Semiconductor and Technology Industry

- Order of the Coif
- Editor-in-Chief, *Syracuse Law Review*
- Associate Editor, *The Labor Lawyer*

Representative Presentations

- Advising and Defending Clients on Employment Discrimination Claims, Law Firm Alliance 2026 L&E Conference, January 23, 2026
- Co-host of Bond's weekly webinar series, "Business in 2024"
- Breakfast Keynote Session: Legal Update, 2024 Annual All-Day Conference, CNY SHRM, June 21, 2024
- Breakfast Keynote Session: Legal Update, 2023 Annual All-Day Conference, CNY SHRM, June 22, 2023
- An Interview with Kristen Smith, Labor and Municipal Law, Legally Bond Podcast, March 6, 2023
- HR Briefing: 2022 - A Year in Review, MACNY, January 10, 2023
- Breakfast Keynote Session: Legal Update, 2022 Annual All-Day Conference, CNY SHRM, June 2, 2022
- Are You Ready? NYS Paid Family Leave, Empire State Society of Association Executives, November 9, 2017
- Three Critical Issues for New York Employers, New York Association of Long Term Care Administrators, April 21, 2017
- What Employers Need to Know, Reagan Companies' Academy of Risk Management Seminar, 2017 Labor & Employment Law Update, March 2, 2017
- Labor & Employment Law Update: Navigating Change in 2017, CNY SHRM, January 26, 2017
- Other Employment Laws You Need to Know, National Business Institute, November 14, 2016
- Legal Issues Regarding Company Wellness Programs, Syracuse Media Group, Healthiest Employers of CNY, November 4, 2015
- The Fair Labor Standards Act: Understanding the Proposed Regulatory Changes, and Avoiding the Minefield of Wage & Hour Liability, CNY SHRM, October 8, 2015
- Ask the Experts, 2015 Conference, CNY SHRM, June 12, 2015
- Solving the Puzzle of Complex Accommodation Issues in the Evolving Workplace, Tompkins County SHRM, November 6, 2014
- Complex Issues in Accommodating a Diverse Workforce, Annual Conference, NYS SHRM, September 30, 2014
- Employment Law Basics for Supervisors, Managers & Business Owners, CNY SHRM, September 25, 2014
- Top Ten Employment Law Trends and Issues for 2014, Legal Update, CNY SHRM, January 22, 2014
- Identifying & Addressing Common Human Resource Management Pitfalls, Bond's Tenth Annual Best Practices for Nonprofits, January 16, 2014
- The NLRB's New, Aggressive Focus on Non-Union Employers, SHRM, March 7, 2013

Representative Publications

- Company news: Kristen E. Smith returns to Bond, Schoeneck & King, *syracuse.com*, April 20, 2022
- Quoted in "U.S. sues Estée Lauder for allegedly discriminating against new dads," *WBBH*, August 31, 2017
- "Lawfully Managing an Aging Workforce," *Manufacturing Matters*, Summer 2017
- Quoted in "New York Employers Must Prepare for Paid-Family-Leave Program," *HR Today*, May 22, 2017
- "New York's Paid Family Leave Proposed Regulations: A Primer for Employers," *Central New York Business Journal*, April 3, 2017
- "Know the Law: Background Checks Continue to Trip Up Employers," *HR Specialist*, *New York Employment Law*, May 2014
- Kristen Smith and John Gaal, "Federal Agencies Extend Their Reach," *New York Law Journal*, January 22, 2013

Other Activities

- Board of Directors, Food Bank of Central New York
- Board of Trustees, Bishop Ludden Junior-Senior High School