

Thomas J. Paravola

OF COUNSEL, CHICAGO

Personable in dealing with clients, practical when solving their problems, Thomas Paravola has honed his legal expertise in the highly technical realm of employee benefits law. The research and analysis required to sort through and address complicated situations and problems first attracted him to study law. Possessing the organizational skills and discipline necessary to succeed, he was drawn to employee benefits issues by the opportunity to engage in a comprehensive and extensive body of law involving important personal matters—such as health benefits and pension plans—matters he considers from the perspective of both employers and employees.

Thomas started practicing law at a benefits consulting firm, dealing primarily with tax qualified retirement plans sponsored by small employers. Since 1985 he has worked for law firms exclusively, serving both large and small businesses, in addition to governmental agencies, churches and various tax-exempt organizations. His practice has evolved to encompass the full range of employee benefits, which he addresses from a unique perspective, since he himself is a small business owner. Thomas's practical understanding of the needs and demands of owning and operating a retail store contributes to the quality of his counsel.



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PRACTICE AREA

Employment and Benefits

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Concentrating in employee benefits law exclusively, Thomas counsels all sizes and types of businesses, multi-employer pension and health benefit trusts, as well as governmental, church and other tax-exempt entities. Colleagues praise his technical efficiency, thoroughness and hands-on style when addressing even the most routine matters. To clients he is a problem solver—organized, balanced and practical. Thomas handles the complete range of employee benefits matters, including all types of:

- retirement plans
- health and welfare benefit plans
- executive compensation arrangements.

Having worked with attorneys specializing in corporate law, litigation, tax planning and estate management, Thomas has been privy to many viewpoints, which well serve him when dealing with benefits issues that arise:

- during business transactions—purchases, sales, mergers, etc.
- while conducting financing transactions involving benefit plan assets
- when consulting on benefit claim litigation and QDRO preparation
- while advising plan participants on benefit distribution alternatives and tax consequences.

EXPERIENCE

Schuyler, Roche & Zwirner, P.C.
Chicago, Illinois

Of Counsel
2004 to Present

Ungaretti & Harris
Chicago, Illinois

Partner
2000 to 2004

Burke, Warren, Mackey & Serritella
Chicago, Illinois

Of Counsel
1996 to 2000

Partner
1992 to 1996

Burke, Wilson & McIlvaine
Chicago, Illinois

Partner
1989 to 1992

Burke, Griffin, Chomicz & Wienke
Chicago, Illinois

Associate
1985 to 1989

Engler, Zoghlin, Mann
Skokie, Illinois

Staff Attorney
1981 to 1985

ACHIEVEMENTS

Thomas counts among his legal accomplishments:

- having served as counsel in establishing two sets of multi-employer pension and health trusts, including documenting the trusts and obtaining IRS approvals, then continuing to represent the trusts in their operations to provide pension and health benefits
- documenting and resolving legal issues for the restructuring of pension, 401(k) and 403(b) retirement plans of a church-owned hospital chain
- constructing a retirement plan document format for a large governmental pension plan by consolidating multiple prior documents and reconciling the plan document to collective bargaining agreements—a format still in use for this plan
- assisting in designing and documenting stock option plans for privately held startup companies
- working with a mid-sized service business sponsoring a profit sharing/401(k) plan to resolve a multiple-year, tax law “top heavy” contribution issue, which, had it not been resolved favorably, could have disqualified the plan from its tax-exempt status and involved significant additional financial liability for the employer
- representing a number of similar small employers sponsoring Section 501(c)(9) “VEBA” health benefit trusts, in responding to comprehensive audit initiatives of the IRS.

If you or your organization seeks experienced and proven counsel in this highly nuanced legal realm, we encourage you to contact Thomas Paravola.

EDUCATION AND DISTINCTIONS

J.D., University of Illinois College of Law,
Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, 1981.

B.A., Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois, 1978.

Certified Public Accountant, 1982.

BAR AND COURT ADMISSION

Illinois, 1981

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

University of Illinois College of Law
Alumni Association

Elmhurst College Alumni Association

CIVIC AFFILIATION

Elmhurst Morning Rotary Club; chair of club-sponsored 5K run since 1996; past president and treasurer; member, 1992 to present.