

Joshua Mates

Partner in Charge – San Francisco



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Gig Economy
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Strategic Counseling and Litigation
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San Francisco

Joshua has practiced employment law in Cooley's labor and employment practice group for more than 20 years. His practice includes a broad mix of litigation and employment counseling, as he provides strategic advice regarding the full spectrum of human resources matters, from the beginning of the employment relationship to the end – drafting and negotiating contracts, implementing policies and practices, ensuring protection of trade secrets, ensuring compliance with complex statutory and regulatory matters, advising companies regarding worker classification matters, pay equity analyses, diversity initiatives and employee relations matters, advising executives and boards of directors through complex internal investigations, and investigating, negotiating and litigating pre-suit and filed actions. He also regularly assists clients with the employment-related aspects of M&A transactions, financings and initial public offerings.

In the litigation context, Joshua has handled cases in federal and California courts and has represented employers in mediations, arbitrations and other forms of alternative dispute resolution, as well as before the California Labor Commissioner, US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, California Civil Rights Department and other administrative agencies.

Joshua's clients include a wide range of technology and life sciences entities, and he works with companies from early-stage formation through becoming mature public companies. In Joshua's broad practice, he regularly advises hundreds of clients each year on employment matters.

Within Cooley, Joshua is a longtime member of the firmwide diversity committee, and he regularly participates in on-campus interviewing and other recruiting efforts, including interviewing potential summer associate candidates at the Bay Area Diversity Fair.

Education

Stanford Law School JD, 2002

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) BA, Communication Studies, summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, 1998

Admissions & Credentials

California

Court Admissions

US District Court for the Central District of California

US District Court for the Eastern District of California

US District Court for the Northern District of California

US District Court for the Southern District of California

Rankings & Accolades

Chambers USA: Labor & Employment – California (2026)

The Legal 500 US: Workplace and Employment Counseling (2025)