



J. Keith Coates, Jr.
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Primary Practice Areas

- Employment
- Business Litigation and Commercial Law

Education

- University of Tennessee, J.D., 1998
- University of the South, B.A., 1995

Bar Admissions

- Georgia, 1998
- North Carolina, 2005
- Tennessee, 2007

Accolades

- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in Employment Law – Management since 2019
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in Litigation – Labor and Employment since 2019
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in Commercial Litigation for 2024
- Voted a Top Attorney in Knoxville by his peers in *CityView* magazine for Labor & Employment Law - Employer

J. Keith Coates, Jr. Biography

J. Keith Coates, Jr. is a member in the firm whose primary areas of practice include employment and labor law litigation, and general commercial litigation. Mr. Coates has represented clients in civil rights litigation before trial and appellate courts nationwide, and in administrative proceedings before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Labor Relations Board, U.S. Department of Labor, and various state administrative agencies.

Mr. Coates represents clients in all types of labor and employment law matters, including litigation and counseling in the areas of employment discrimination, workplace harassment, employee discipline, employment contracts, covenants not to compete, wage and hour compliance, collective bargaining issues, accommodating disabilities, family and medical leave compliance, drug and alcohol testing, and employee benefits. He also counsels clients in litigation avoidance and compliance with various federal and state laws related to employment and assists clients in the preparation and revision of employee handbooks, employment policies and related materials. Mr. Coates also handles a variety of commercial litigation, with an emphasis on business torts and commercial contract disputes.

Mr. Coates is a native of Kingsport, Tennessee. He graduated with honors from the University of the South in 1995 with a B.A. in political science. Mr. Coates earned his J.D., summa cum laude, from The University of Tennessee College of Law in 1998 where he was a member of the Moot Court Board, Order of the Coif and Order of the Barristers.

Prior to joining Woolf McClane, Mr. Coates practiced with an international law firm in its Atlanta, Georgia, and Raleigh, North Carolina offices. He is a member of the Tennessee Bar Association and the Knoxville Bar Association. He is currently licensed to practice law in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee.