

Valerie Butera

Senior Counsel

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📍 [Detroit, Michigan](#)



Valerie Butera

"Valerie is confident and always very well prepared. She makes the work for the client very easy."

Valerie Butera is Senior Counsel with Conn Maciel Carey LLP, working in the Detroit area, where she provides the full range of workplace safety and health law services to employers.

Valerie has focused her legal career on the representation of employers and trade associations in workplace safety and health matters. She has extensive experience, both in private practice and in-house, working with a wide range of industries including chemical and petrochemical manufacturing and petroleum refining, automotive, electric utility, manufacturing, construction, railway, grain, retail, hospitality, healthcare, and food services. She litigates OSHA cases before state and federal agencies and courts, and provides comprehensive OSHA counseling.

Valerie litigates cases for employers cited by OSHA and State OSH Plans for alleged violations of numerous state and federal workplace safety regulations and provides catastrophe response assistance where necessary. She provides strategic guidance for employers managing the defense of OSHA citations with simultaneous related civil complaints, and she represents employers in whistleblower protection matters.

Valerie minimizes client risks effectively and efficiently, providing comprehensive counsel for issues ranging from how best to navigate an OSHA inspection to the implementation of process safety management programs. Valerie also conducts or directs attorney-client privileged general safety and process safety management audits.

Valerie was personally recognized among a short list of OSHA defense attorneys by Chambers USA national rankings for the OSHA Law category nationwide in 2022 and every year since.

Recognition & Awards

- “Band 3” Ranked Attorney in Occupational Safety and Health, Chambers USA – Nationwide

Affiliations

- American Bar Association (ABA), Occupational Safety and Health Law Committee
- American Bar Association (ABA), Labor & Employment Law Committee
 - Leadership Development Program Alumna
 - Past Co-Chair Membership Development
 - Past Co-Chair In-House Counsel Committee
 - Past Co-Chair Diversity Committee

Education

- J.D., University of Maryland School of Law, with honors, 2003
- B.A., Hope College, with honors, 1997

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland
- Michigan
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland

Experience

- Lead In-House OSHA Counsel for a Fortune 10 manufacturing company, advised and directed all aspects of compliance and litigation with state and federal OSHA.
- Successfully petitioned the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for interlocutory review. Petitions are granted only about once a decade. Commission granted relief requested by the employer and set precedent establishing a three-part test for determining when a third-party expert’s report is protected by the attorney-client privilege. The employer prevailed under the new test.
- Defended several Fortune 500 companies against citations alleging process safety management and related violations arising from OSHA National Emphasis Programs.
- Drafted numerous briefs for trade associations and employers before federal appellate courts on matters of significant importance, including multiple process safety management appeals and a pre-enforcement challenge to a newly promulgated rule.
- Drafted employer and trade group comments to OSHA Requests for Information and notice and comment rulemaking.
- Conducted internal audit for major automotive manufacturer and counseled client on how to best use the audit results to increase employee safety and health. Client reported a 75% drop in unemployment costs as a

result of this process.

- Designed and implemented process safety management programs for Fortune 500 companies.