STITES & HARBISON PLLC



Rachel Owsley

Title: Member

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Rachel Owsley is an experienced transactional attorney whose practice focuses primarily on employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) matters—a combination of corporate, tax, and ERISA work. She advises businesses, shareholders, and ESOP trustees on the establishment, operation, administration, and termination of ESOPs, as well as ESOP-related transactions. Rachel also counsels clients on mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, executive compensation and employee benefit matters, commercial transactions, conservation easements, and government contracting matters.

CAPABILITIES

Practice Areas

- Airport Law
- Business Services
- Corporate General Services
- Corporate Governance & Disclosure
- Employee Benefits
- Joint Ventures
- Manufacturing
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Conservation Easements
- Health Care – Business Transactions & Finance
- Taxation

RECENT ASSIGNMENTS

- Represents companies, ESOP trustees, lenders, and shareholders in matters involving the establishment, administration, and termination of ESOPs, including leveraged ESOP transactions, sales of ESOP-owned companies, fiduciary duty issues, corporate governance issues, and Department of Labor investigations.
- Serves as outside general, ESOP, and corporate counsel to clients in the aerospace, telecommunications, engineering, manufacturing, and construction industries (including government contractors in these industries).
- Advises businesses entering into a wide variety of commercial transactions, including supply agreements, manufacturing agreements, distribution agreements, teaming agreements, and joint ventures, especially in the government contracting context and in the context of ESOP-owned companies.
- Advises clients regarding qualified retirement plans and nonqualified deferred compensation arrangements, including ERISA and tax compliance issues.
- Leads teams through M&A transactions and other strategic corporate transactions, including coordinating or advising on investment bank engagements, deal structuring, due diligence, and post-closing integration.
- Represents land conservancies and private parties in matters relating to conservation easements, including drafting and negotiating conservation easements and advising on related tax issues.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Kentucky

FIRM LEADERSHIP

- Business & Finance Group, Louisville Office Chair
- Audit Letter Response Committee, Member
- Diversity Committee, Member
- Opinions Committee, Member
- Recruiting Committee, Member
- Corporate Transparency Act Committee, Member

MEMBERSHIPS

- American Bar Association
- Kentucky Bar Association
- Louisville Bar Association
- ESOP Association
- National Center for Employee Ownership
- Hispanic National Bar Association
- Louisville Employee Benefits Council (LEBC)
- Land Trust Alliance

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Hispanic National Bar Association Latina Executive Leadership Program, Class of 2021
- Leadership Louisville, Class of 2021
- Maryhurst, Inc., Board of Directors and Corporate Secretary (2012-18)

EDUCATION

- University of Louisville Louis D. Brandeis School of Law J.D., *magna cum laude* 2007
- Hanover College B.A., *summa cum laude* 2004

BEFORE STITES & HARBISON

Rachel joined Stites & Harbison in September 2007 after participating in the firm's summer associate program in 2005 and 2006.

MORE THAN STITES & HARBISON

In her spare time, Rachel loves to travel and explore new places with her husband and sons.

LANGUAGES

Spanish

ACCOLADES

- *Martindale-Hubbell*® AV-Preeminent® Peer Review Rated
- *Best Lawyers in America*®, Corporate Law; Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law (2024-27)
- *Best Lawyers in America*®, Louisville Corporate Law Lawyer of the Year (2027)
- *ChambersUSA*, “America’s Leading Lawyers for Business,” Corporate/Mergers & Acquisitions (2026)
- *Legal500*, US City Elite, Kentucky Elite, Corporate and M&A (2026)