

James L. Komie

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“I am a litigator and counselor who focuses on employment law and trade secret/non-compete issues.”

Jim concentrates his practice on civil litigation and counseling matters, with an emphasis on employment and trade secret/non-compete issues.

Jim has a depth of experience advising financial services firms and their employees on a wide range of legal issues. He has represented clients before FINRA arbitration panels in cases involving employment, raiding, promissory notes, and sales practices. Jim has also represented financial services industry participants on regulatory and compliance issues and in their interactions with regulatory agencies.

He advises companies in employee defection and general employment matters, including non-compete agreements and the protection of proprietary business information. Jim regularly writes and speaks on new developments in the law regarding non-competes and trade secrets. He is a founder and contributor to the H2 Non-Compete & Trade Secrets Law Blog at non-compete.law.

Business Litigation

- Financial Institutions
- Labor and Employment

Jim is nationally known for his representation of clients in the financial services industry. He has appeared in dozens of FINRA arbitrations throughout the United States. In 2016, FINRA adopted a rule change he proposed relating to the FINRA arbitration process. He is a contributing legal editor of the *Securities Litigation Commentator*, a leading industry publication.

He also represents clients in general federal and state court litigation, employment and separation agreements, and probate and trust litigation.

Representative Matters

- Successfully defended a financial services firm and an investment adviser representative against a multi-million dollar arbitration claim filed by former customers relating to losses suffered by the customers in the stock market downturn at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Represented a financial services firm in an arbitration against two former employees, obtaining an award of \$4.6MM against the employees on loans provided to them by the firm and complete denial of their counterclaims.
- Represented a financial services company in a multi-week arbitration against a group of employees who defected to a competitor, obtaining a high-six figures award against the employees and their new firm and denial of all counterclaims.
- Successfully defended a startup company in an arbitration brought by its former VP of sales, defeating his claim for unpaid compensation and obtaining an order nullifying his stock rights, and later defeating his attempt to vacate the award in federal court.
- Successfully defended an individual trustee at a bench trial lasting several weeks in the Circuit Court of Cook County against an accounting claim brought by one of the trust's beneficiaries.

Education

- University of Michigan Law School, 1987
 - J.D., *cum laude*
- University of Michigan, 1984
 - B.A., with high distinction and high honors

Memberships

- Chicago Bar Association
 - Securities Law Committee
- Illinois State Bar Association
- American Bar Association

Admissions

- Illinois, 1987
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
 - Trial Bar, 1997
 - General Bar, 1991

Professional Achievements

- Illinois *Leading Lawyers*: "Leading Commercial Litigation Lawyers," 2023
- Illinois *Leading Lawyers*, 2005-2025
- Illinois *Super Lawyers*, 2005; 2007
- Martindale-Hubbell® AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rating