

Checking In: Peter (Pete) A. Steinmeyer, Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.

by Practical Law Labor & Employment

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Q&A with Practical Law Labor & Employment Advisory Board member Peter (Pete) A. Steinmeyer of Epstein Becker & Green, P.C..

Name: Peter (Pete) A. Steinmeyer

Title: Member of the Firm

Organization Name: Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.

Education: 1990: J.D., University of Chicago Law School;
1987: B.A., University of Virginia

Career in Brief:

1999 – Present – Member, Epstein Becker & Green, P.C. – Chicago

1999 – 1999 – Shareholder, Ogletree Deakins - Chicago

1994 – 1998 – Associate, Murphy Smith & Polk - Chicago

1992 – 1993 – Law Clerk, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois - Chicago

1990 – 1992 – Associate, Bryan Cave – St. Louis

What do you think is currently the biggest challenge facing employment lawyers?

Given the pace of change at both the federal and state level, it is a challenge to stay on top of all of the developments in the field of employment law. By necessity, this is leading to ever greater sub-specialization within the field of employment law.

Are there any changes on the horizon that you think will significantly affect your practice?

A majority of my practice is in the area of employee mobility and trade secrets. Regardless of whether the FTC's proposed non-compete ban ever goes into effect (I doubt that it will), there will continue to be a tremendous amount of legislative and judicial activity in this space. I expect that companies will continue to move away from traditional non-compete agreements, except in narrowly targeted circumstances, and will instead

focus on "garden leave" provisions, robust confidentiality agreements, and customer non-solicitation agreements.

What one piece of advice would you give a junior attorney considering specializing in your area of law?

When you are starting out, don't be concerned about "trying to develop business." That will come in due course. Focus on becoming an excellent attorney. Read everything you can about labor and employment law and take every opportunity to go to court and attend arbitrations and mediations. Be excellent.

What do you like most about your job?

It is an incredible honor when a client calls and entrusts me to help them solve a problem. I never get over that.

What are some of the biggest challenges you faced throughout your career, and how did you overcome them?

I had three children by the time I was 32, and it wasn't easy balancing the demands of family with the practice of law. I didn't always get the balance right, but I never lost sight of my priorities. As my Dad taught me, "You can always find the time to do the things you really want to do."

If not a lawyer, what would you be?

A golf writer. I caught the bug in my mid-forties and the addiction has only gotten worse. I now subscribe to five different golf podcasts: *TalkinGolf History*, *The Golfer's Journal Podcast*, *The Fire Pit Collective*, *The Shotgun Start*, and *The Fried Egg*.

What has been the most impactful pro bono project that you have worked on recently?

I advised the Illinois Chamber of Commerce in its negotiations over a comprehensive reform of Illinois

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law regarding non-competes and non-solicits. In the end, we were able to reach a compromise that was unanimously passed by the Illinois House and Senate and went into effect on January 1, 2022. Nobody got everything they wanted, and the law is not perfect, but it showed that political compromises are still possible.

What is your favorite book?

The Patrick O'Brian *Master and Commander* novels about a British naval officer during the Napoleonic era. Over the span of two years, I read all 21 books in the series. I hope to do it again one day!

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