

A professional headshot of Debra Hinshaw Vierra, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair and bangs, smiling. She is wearing a black blazer over a bright pink top. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with reddish-brown architectural elements.

## Debra Hinshaw Vierra Of Counsel

With over 25 years of employment law experience, Debra Hinshaw Vierra is a recognized and trusted source of advice to human resources professionals and public and private employers all over the state. Her extensive experience includes representing employers in collective bargaining negotiations and arbitrations; unfair labor practice and representation proceedings; and all types of employment discrimination and harassment proceedings, from mediation and administrative proceedings through litigation. She also advises both public and private clients on disability accommodation, family and medical leave issues, personnel policies, and employment agreements.

One of the key components of Deb's practice is her exhaustive experience in conducting workplace investigations. Throughout her career, she has conducted over 250 workplace investigations, an area where she excels not only on her knowledge of the law, but on her critical thinking, research, and communications skills. As a result, Deb has been retained by both private and public entities to advise

on in-house investigations, as well as to conduct neutral third-party investigations. The range of claims that she has investigated includes claims of harassment, discrimination and retaliation; failure to investigate; failure to reasonably accommodate; theft and destruction of Company trade secrets and other company property; ethical violations; actual and threatened workplace violence; and, other violations of employer policies and practices. Her background and training ensure thorough investigations and sound conclusions supported by the evidence.

Prior to joining White Brenner, Deb served as Of Counsel at Cook Brown LLP, as a shareholder at Littler Mendelson, the nation's largest labor and employment firm, and was a founding partner of Employment Law Counsel, LLP.

As a noted expert in her practice, Deb is often asked to author, teach, and lecture on employment law matters, and is frequently called upon to provide expert testimony on the adequacy of workplace



investigations. She also provides customized workplace training for both managerial and non-managerial staff on subjects such as sexual harassment, discrimination, and management practices.

Deb is admitted to practice before all California state courts and all U.S. District Courts in the State of California.

### Projects

- Provides advice and counsel, training on management practices, and harassment, discrimination and diversity awareness for private and public associations, public agencies, local governments, and companies in a wide range of industries, including construction, manufacturing, restaurant, service, and banking
- Negotiated collective bargaining agreements for healthcare, food processing, manufacturing, and mining industry clients
- Successfully guided companies in the food processing, healthcare, manufacturing, entertainment, and wine industries through union organizing attempts
- Investigated student and employee complaints of discrimination and harassment in several school districts
- Represented elected officials during investigations into alleged misconduct
- Conducted a department-wide sexual harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and bullying investigation for several California counties
- Conducted an agency-wide harassment and retaliation investigation for a California special district
- Conducted a department-wide investigation involving pregnancy, age, gender, and sexual discrimination and harassment claims, as well as employee theft claims, for a California special district



## Credentials

- J.D., Santa Clara University, School of Law
- B.A., University of California, Santa Barbara
- Sustaining Member, AOWI (Association of Workplace Investigators)
- Member, AOWI Seminar Committee
- Member, AOWI Local Circle
- Member, California Bar Association, Labor and Employment Section
- Judicial Clerk to Presiding Justice, California Court of Appeal, 4th District
- Board Member, St. Francis High School Parent Guild
- Assistant Chair, Christian Brothers Auction/Holy Bowl Fundraiser



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