

## 3 Ward and Smith Attorneys Recognized as 'Labor and Employment Stars'

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For the third consecutive year, *Benchmark Litigation* has named three Ward and Smith attorneys to its prestigious Labor and Employment annual guide.

Ken Gray, Will Oden, and Devon Williams are recognized as "Labor and Employment Stars" in the 3rd *Benchmark* edition, which was published in October 2020. This means

they have been identified as "preeminent L&E litigation practitioners in the U.S." The publication started the Labor and Employment guide in 2018 in response to the ever-increasing demand for a specialized study of the labor and Employment litigation practices. The methodology for the guide mirrors that of all Benchmark studies. Rankings are the result of a survey of firm questionnaires, peer review interviews, and client reviews. You can learn more about the publication's methodology [here](#).



Ken leads the firm's Labor and Employment practice. His practice experience encompasses various areas of employment-related litigation. He advises clients and litigates cases involving all forms of employment discrimination, wrongful discharge, and breach of employment contracts from small start-up companies to Fortune 500 corporations. Ken is a frequent lecturer on employment discrimination, workplace retaliation, workers' compensation, and wage and hour law issues. His peers have rated him as being "preeminent" in his fields of law.



Will leads Ward and Smith's Workplace Safety and Health practice. His practice experience encompasses various areas of employment and workplace-related counseling and civil litigation in both the federal and state courts at the trial and appellate levels. Will also regularly represents employers and employees before the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), the North

Carolina Department of Labor (NCDOL), the North Carolina Industrial Commission (NCIC), the North

Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security (DES), and federal and state wage and hour divisions.



Devon's experience focuses on a wide range of labor and employment issues, including wage and hour matters, federal contractor compliance, employment discrimination, and harassment, employee discipline and termination, personnel policies, and background checks. In matters relating to employee benefits, she concentrates on issues confronting welfare benefit plans (such as medical, dental, and other plans) and their sponsors, including the provisions and impact of the Affordable Care Act.