

# Media Mention: Law360 Interviews Attorneys About New Employment Law Specialty Petition

---

Written By **William A. Oden, III** (wao@wardandsmith.com) and **Grant B. Osborne** (gbo@wardandsmith.com)

November 21, 2022



**Law360, a legal-based news service, recently interviewed labor and employment attorneys Will Oden and Grant Osborne about their efforts to create a new board-certified specialty in employment law.**

Will and Grant are petitioning the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization to recognize this specialty.

In the interview, they argued that employment law is an increasingly specialized field that affects many different areas of society, from individuals to businesses. They stated that as it is a complex area, there needs to be greater recognition for attorneys specializing in employment law. From the article:

Though not a requirement for lawyers who practice in the field, Osborne said, an employment specialty would provide potential clients with a public service.

"Our thinking is that employment law is a widely practiced field of law," he told Law360 on Friday. "There are literally hundreds of lawyers in North Carolina who practice in the field of employment law. Right now, there is no objective way potential clientele — employers or employees — can discern who is competent in the field, which is very complicated and continually evolving."

Osborne pointed specifically to the laws surrounding noncompete agreements, worker classification and protected activities, which he said can and do change quickly. In North Carolina, for example, covenants not to compete are largely governed by ever-developing common law instead of statutes and regulation, while the agreements themselves can "literally stand or fall depending on some of the words used in that contract," he said.

Meanwhile, worker classifications and protected activities are governed by state and federal agencies. Osborne pointed to the National Labor Relations Board, whose enforcement priorities can change over time, he said.

Attorneys in North Carolina can't claim to be a specialist or specialize in any particular area of the law unless they are certified. According to the state bar, the credential helps clients cut through "self-laudatory information in advertising and marketing" because specialization is based entirely

on "objective criteria."

Read the full article here, behind the paywall.

Will and Grant will present their proposal before the Board of Legal Specialization on December 9. Before that meeting, they must collect signatures from at least 100 North Carolina attorneys. Attorneys interested in creating an Employment Law Specialty should fill out a three-question survey, which can be found here: <https://forms.gle/8Kpy7sftVxvA9xXUA>.