

Melanie Samuels

Partner

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Melanie Samuels (she/her) is a Partner at Singleton Urquhart Reynolds Vogel LLP with extensive experience in Labour and Employment Law, and has been practicing in this area for more than 30 years. She is Chair of the **Employment and Labour Group**, Co-Chair of the Diversity and Inclusivity and Strategic Planning Committees, and the first woman on the firm's Management Committee. She advises clients on all workplace issues including providing guidance on disciplining and/or dismissing employees, drafting employment contracts and policies and advising on human rights issues, including harassment and the duty to accommodate.

A particular area of focus for Melanie is working with creative industries, including the film and music industry, to help guide and inform their harassment policies and advise them on how best to implement protocols in the workplace to effectively deal with bullying and harassment. Melanie works with employers to investigate these kinds of claims and provides recommendations on how to manage these difficult issues. Melanie is regularly invited to speak on key workplace issues including bullying and harassment. She also provides hands-on training to various industry groups seeking to ensure respectful work environments.

Melanie also specializes in business-related immigration including applications for labour market impact assessments, exemption applications, work permits and temporary resident permits and visas. She determines the best option for Permanent Residency Applications, Provincial Nominee Programs, Canadian Experience Class, Express Entry and Federal Skilled Worker Programs. In addition, she assists with Spousal and Family Sponsorships and Rehabilitation Applications.

Melanie is a regular speaker on workplace law issues for the legal profession, and various industry groups and associations.

RANKINGS + RECOGNITION

- Recognized in **Benchmark Canada** - The Definitive Guide to Canada's Leading Litigation Firms & Attorneys as a "Litigation Star"

EXPERIENCE

- Advising on individual termination and group layoffs in non-union and unionized workforces.
- Advising on employment issues related to sales of business and bankruptcy proceedings.
- Negotiating and drafting Employment Agreements.
- Preparing and implementing Personnel Policies including Workplace Harassment Policies and investigating human rights complaints.
- Filing labour market opinion applications and exemptions for mining and hospitality industries and in unusual circumstances.
- Advising on all matters relating to business immigration including work permits, and permanent residency applications.
- Advising as a Roster Investigator for the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA).

PUBLICATIONS

- Featured, **"B.C. Worker Fired for Causing Workplace Hazard, Lying About It,"** Canadian HR Reporter, March, 2024



Employment and Labour
Immigration
Corporate Commercial
Entertainment Law

(604) 673-7405
msamuels@singleton.com

Assistant:

Sheena Godinho
sgodinho@singleton.com
(604) 682-7474 ext. 3312

EDUCATION

- Bachelor of Arts, Lee College (University of Judaism/UCLA), 1986
- Bachelor of Laws, University of British Columbia, 1989
- Called to the Bar of British Columbia, 1990

- Featured, ["After the Fact: Alleging Cause Post-Termination is Fair Game, but Tread Carefully,"](#) March, 2024
- Featured, ["Melanie Samuels: Rewriting the Script – A Tribute on International Women's Day,"](#) March 8, 2024
- Featured, ["Cupid in the Cubicles: Balancing Love, and Law, in Workplace Romances,"](#) HR Law Canada, February, 2024
- Featured, ["BC Truck Driver Fired After Hitting Pedestrian, Shifting Blame,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, February, 2024
- Co-author, ["New return-to-work obligations for both employers and employees in British Columbia,"](#) January, 2024
- Co-author, ["New Return-to-Work Obligations for Both Employers and Employees in British Columbia,"](#) January, 2024
- Featured, ["Railway Worker's Dishonesty, Second Relapse Constitute Undue Hardship,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, August, 2023
- Featured, ["BC Employer Successfully Defends Against Sex, Disability Discrimination Complaints,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, June, 2023
- Featured, ["Toronto Worker Tries to Walk Back Verbal, Written Resignation – Is It Accepted?,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, April, 2023
- Featured, ["'Don't Be Intimidated' in Asking for Medical Info, Says Lawyer,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, December, 2022
- Featured, ["Post-Incident Drug and Alcohol Testing Justified for Near Miss,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, October, 2022
- Featured, ["New Rules for Work Refusals in B.C. Take Effect,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, August, 2022
- Featured, ["Husband Quits, Wife Fired and \\$70,000 Given Out in Discrimination Damages,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, July, 2022
- Featured, ["B.C. Supreme Court Clarifies Family Status Discrimination Test,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, May, 2022
- Co-author, ["B.C. Court Deducts CERB Payment in Wrongful Dismissal Claim,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, May, 2022
- Featured, ["\\$15,000 in aggravated damages for false allegations of cause,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, March, 2022
- Featured, ["B.C. tribunal dismisses worker's mental disability discrimination claim,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, February, 2022
- Quoted in the Canadian Lawyer Magazine article, ["Wrongful Dismissal Claim Hinges on Reasonableness of Policy, Accommodation Argument,"](#) January, 2022
- Co-author, ["B.C. Deducts CERB Payments In Wrongful Dismissal Claim,"](#) December, 2021
- Featured, ["Women in Law: Tips for success from leading female lawyers in the legal industry,"](#) Canadian Lawyer Magazine, April, 2021
- Co-author, ["Why the Length of Notice Provided by Employees is Important,"](#) PeopleTalk, March, 2021
- Co-author, ["Can Discrimination Arise from Just One Incident?,"](#) HR Reporter, March, 2021
- Co-author, ["GEA Refrigeration Inc. v Chang et al., 2020 BCCA 361 – The BC Court of Appeal provides guidance on remedies available for breach of confidence by former employees in the high-tech industrial marketplace,"](#) January, 2021
- Co-author, ["How can a Release Eliminate Legal Liability?,"](#) HR Reporter, June, 2020
- Co-author, ["Travel Restrictions and Self-Isolation Requirements in the Ongoing Spread of the COVID-19 Virus in Canada,"](#) March, 2020
- Co-author, ["Termination and Bad Faith: Proper Dealing in the Manner of Termination,"](#) HR Reporter, March, 2020
- Co-author, ["Disclosing Issues with Mental Health,"](#) Canadian HR Reporter, March, 2020
- Co-author, ["Just when the Smoke was beginning to Clear,"](#) PeopleTalk Magazine, November, 2019
- Co-author, ["Post-Glimhagen: Mischaracterizing Working Relationships Continues to Cost Employers,"](#) August, 2019
- Co-author, ["Employees Hold the Key to Enforcement of New Terms,"](#) August, 2019
- Co-author, ["Policy Makes Perfect?,"](#) People Talk Magazine, May, 2019
- Co-author, ["Independent Contractors vs Employees: Knowing the Difference Before it Costs You,"](#) People Talk Magazine, February, 2019

PRESENTATIONS

- Co-presenter, *"In Real Life (IRL): Managing Tomorrow's Challenges in the Office Environment,"* (with David Edinger), Singleton Reynolds' Workplace Law Webinar, November, 2022
- Speaker, *"Best Practices for Meeting Legal Obligations Associated with a Hybrid and Remote Workforce,"* Canadian Lawyer Employment Law Masterclass West, November, 2022
- Speaker, *"Raising the Bar: Creating a Culture of Giving Back,"* FCI's Women in Leadership Conference, November, 2021
- Co-presenter, *"Mental Health and the Duty to Accommodate,"* Human Resources: Current Realities and Charting the Path Forward, First Nations Public Service Secretariat, June, 2021
- Co-presenter, *"Business Travel and Immigration in a COVID World,"* Singleton Reynolds' Workplace Law Group Lunch and Learn, April, 2021
- Co-presenter, *"Employer/Employee Obligations in a COVID World,"* Singleton Reynolds' Workplace Law Group Lunch and Learn, April, 2021
- Co-presenter, *"Termination Options in a COVID World,"* CPHR BC & Yukon, January, 2021
- Speaker, *"Human Rights and Diversity Policies in the Workplace,"* Chartered Professionals in Human Resources of BC & Yukon Diversity and Inclusion Virtual Symposium and Showcase, November, 2020
- Speaker, *"Respectful Work Places,"* Inclusivity in Publishing Workshop, Association of Book Publishers of BC, May, 2019

NEWS + INSIGHTS

- *New Return-to-Work Obligations for Both Employers and Employees in British Columbia* - Jan 16, 2024 • Co-authored
- *British Columbia Deducts CERB Payments In Wrongful Dismissal Claim* - Dec 8, 2021 • Co-authored
- *Madam Justice Linda Loo: Lawyer, Judge, Innovator - and a former Managing Partner of Singleton Reynolds - a Tribute on International Women's Day* - Mar 8, 2021 • Co-authored
- *Breach of Confidence by employees* - Jan 8, 2021 • Co-authored
- *GEA Refrigeration Inc. v Chang et al.*, 2020 BCCA 361 - The BC Court of Appeal provides guidance on remedies available for breach of confidence by former employees in the high-tech industrial marketplace - Jan 5, 2021 • Co-authored
- *Legally Binding Releases: A Summary of Relevant Considerations When Drafting a Severance Agreement and Associated Release* - Jun 3, 2020
- *Travel Restrictions and Self-Isolation Requirements in the Ongoing Spread of the COVID-19 Virus in Canada* - Mar 30, 2020 • Co-authored
- *Termination and Bad Faith: Proper Dealing in the Manner of Termination* - Mar 11, 2020
- *Coronavirus - Employer's Best Practices* - Feb 3, 2020
- *Post-Glimhagen: Mischaracterizing Working Relationships Continues to Cost Employers* - Aug 21, 2019
- *Workplace Law Seminar: Marijuana and the Workplace - Practical Tips For Employers* - Aug 29, 2018
- *Melanie Samuels to present to Women In Film and TV* - Feb 27, 2018
- *US at SU - Spring 2012* - Jul 4, 2017 • Co-authored
- *Federal Government Overhauls the Citizenship Act* - Jul 4, 2017
- *New Policies Can Assist Immigrants* - Oct 18, 2016 • Co-authored
- *Importing Foreign Workers- The Basics* - Mar 11, 2011

COMMUNITY + VOLUNTEERING

- Member, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Singleton Urquhart Reynolds Vogel LLP
- Founder, Lipstick Brigade (providing needed services to Women's shelters)
- Past President, Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver
- Trustee, Jewish Community Foundation
- Cabinet Member, Jewish Federation
- Family Visionary, Jewish Family Service Agency