

Joseph P. Sassi

Senior Counsel

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Overview

Joseph Sassi is a counselor and litigator handling labor and employment matters for businesses, non-profits, and higher education institutions. Joe advises management teams across a broad spectrum of labor and employment law areas, including labor relations, collective bargaining, grievance arbitration, disability accommodation and civil rights compliance, and the defense of claims of harassment and discrimination, among other legal concerns. Joe also provides preventative counsel through trainings, handbook and policy development, as well as by fashioning proactive and forward-thinking risk management and liability insurance strategies. Joe is highly experienced in handling negotiations, arbitration, mediation, and other administrative and judicial proceedings. Joe defends employers in investigations and/or administrative litigation before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), and various state civil rights enforcement agencies, among others.

Joe has particularly deep experience in the higher education sector. Prior to joining Morgan, Brown & Joy, Joe served for 12 years in the Office of General Counsel at Roger Williams University, where he developed keen insight into the unique complexities of the campus workplace. Joe is known for providing practical and strategic counsel to governing boards, executive management teams, academic leaders, and administration, and for cultivating practical, solution-oriented approaches to managing the employer-employee relationship. His diverse experience in higher education settings covers many legal issues including campus labor and employee relations, litigation avoidance and management, academic governance, regulatory compliance, ethics, risk management, as well as faculty, staff, and student affairs.

Prior to Roger Williams University, Joe served as a neutral attorney-investigator and fact finder for the University of Connecticut's equal employment opportunity function. His work as an advisor, strategist, and subject matter resource to university administration spanned many aspects of employment law and EEO compliance matters. Joe was a critical contributor to the University's development and implementation of associated non-discrimination policies and procedures, including those relating to Title IX, the American with Disabilities Act, and the Age Act of 1975.

Prior to his 15 years in higher education, Joe was an in-house litigator for the U.S. Postal Service, where he handled a range of labor and employment litigation matters. In addition to defending the agency's interests in labor and employment litigation before various administrative tribunals, Joe often served as co-counsel with U.S. Attorney's Offices in employment discrimination and labor lawsuits brought by employees and unions in federal courts. This early foundational experience helped establish his outstanding ability to resolve multiple complex legal matters in a high volume and fast-paced environment.

The Personal Perspective

Joe's work in the higher education space is steeped with personal experience accumulated over many years working as in-house counsel for Roger Williams University and at the University of Connecticut. As a result, Joe understands exactly what mission-driven colleges and universities need in order to run successfully and to thrive in an ever-changing and increasingly competitive landscape. As a part of Morgan, Brown & Joy, Joe applies this first-hand experience when advising clients so that he may deliver deeply valuable, proactive, and productive legal advice.

Awards & Recognition

- *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America*, Labor and Employment Law – Management; Litigation – Labor and Employment, 2026

News & Publications

- 25 Morgan, Brown & Joy Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*© 2026 Edition
- CLIENT ALERT: The Pendulum Swings Again: NLRB (Re)Adopts “Clear and Unmistakable Waiver” Standard in Duty to Bargain Cases
- Morgan, Brown & Joy Adds Roger Williams University Co-General Counsel Joseph P. Sassi as Senior Counsel

Community Involvement & Pro Bono

- New England Youth Cycling, Coach

Memberships

- Rhode Island Bar Association
- National Association of College and University Attorneys

- College and University Professional Association for Human Resources

Bar Admissions

- Connecticut
- Rhode Island
- Massachusetts

Court Admissions

- United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
- United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts

Education

- Clark University, B.A., *cum laude*, 1996
- Quinnipiac University School of Law/UConn Labor Education Center, Certified Mediator, 2010
- University of Connecticut School of Law, J.D., 1999