



FIRM SERVICES AT A GLANCE

An investigations law firm committed to investigating and resolving the most complex issues at work and on campus.

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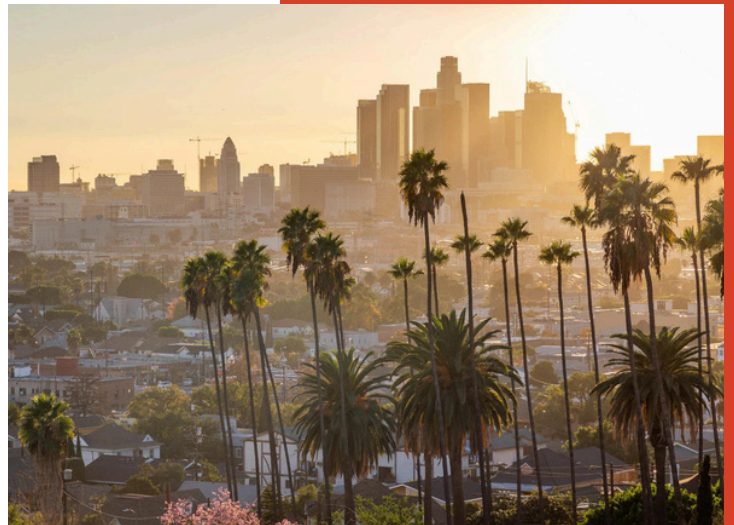
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ABOUT US

THE FIRM

Ellis Investigations Law Corporation (Firm) conducts impartial investigations with a client-centered approach. Our purpose is to help organizations make effective and informed decisions, reduce potential liability and improve relationships with employees, the community and students.

We conduct investigations across California through a well-trained, dispersed team of attorney investigators while maintaining a culture of excellence, consistency, collaboration and continuous improvement. We have decades of experience conducting highly-sensitive employment, compliance and Title IX investigations at all levels of an organization. Our investigations assist organizations in resolving the most complex issues at work and on campus.

CONTACT US



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ATTORNEY INVESTIGATORS

OUR TEAM



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ATTORNEY QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Firm is owned by Leslie Ellis, who has conducted and managed hundreds of investigations on a wide range of issues. Additionally, the Firm has several other attorney investigators and legal support staff with backgrounds in employment law. All the Firm's attorneys have, or will soon obtain, an AWI-CH designation from the Association of Workplace Investigators (AWI). This designation is awarded from the AWI Training Institute, a national-level, intensive Training Institute for Workplace Investigators. We utilize current technology to complete our work and engage in ongoing training and education to ensure our attorney investigators are prepared to perform their work at a high level.

The Firm prides itself on the experience and expertise of its attorneys in conducting workplace investigations. Our attorney investigators have special expertise in conducting investigations in the public sector, including at special districts, cities, counties and state agencies throughout California. We understand the unique and challenging issues that arise for public sector employers, from working within the framework of employee due process rights to dealing with external pressures when the public or elected officials are involved in an investigation. We work closely with our clients to preserve the integrity of the investigation while also ensuring they have the information necessary to address the impact of the investigation on the agency and the public.

Among other issues, the Firm regularly addresses complaints of discrimination, harassment, misuse of public funds, abusive management, whistleblower activity and favoritism. Our clients call on us to investigate even the most sensitive issues involving employees, sworn officers, executives, educators, students, physicians, patients and elected officials. Our attorney investigators are experienced at conducting investigations under the Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights Act and the Firefighters Bill of Rights Act. They are also experienced at conducting investigations in union environments and work well with union representatives and witnesses represented by legal counsel.



INVESTIGATION APPROACH AND ORGANIZATION

The Firm's philosophical approach to investigations is driven by our ethical obligations as attorneys. We provide excellent service to our clients within the scope of our representation as impartial investigators. As attorneys, we conduct investigations that are compliant with California's Private Investigator Act, which requires that attorneys or licensed private investigators conduct third-party workplace investigations. (Bus. & Profess. Code §§7520, et seq.) We enter a limited scope engagement with the client that is governed by the attorney-client privilege. As attorney investigators, we conduct a factfinding investigation in furtherance of a client seeking legal advice from other counsel on what steps to take as a result of the investigation findings. We utilize our expertise in employment law to arrive at findings based on our professional evaluation of the evidence, including evaluating witness credibility.

OUR PRINCIPLES

PROMPTNESS

To help clients meet their obligations to take timely remedial action in response to misconduct concerns, we conduct investigations promptly, enabling parties to return their focus to work as soon as possible. We communicate regularly and provide advance notice if changes in time estimates occur.

IMPARTIALITY

Impartiality is key to ensuring that an investigation withstands scrutiny during litigation. We do not guarantee a specific outcome on any investigation and we maintain an arms-length relationship with our clients during investigations to maintain impartiality.

THOROUGHNESS

We work closely with clients to carefully define the investigation scope and ensure that we address the questions to which our clients need answers.

EFFICIENCY

Investigations, particularly of complex issues, can be expensive. We conduct targeted, efficient investigations without compromising integrity or quality.

INVESTIGATION PLAN

We prepare an investigation plan before starting an investigation to ensure quality deliverables within required timeframes and budgets. The following is an overview of some other significant steps:

- 1.** Conduct initial intake and work with the client to define the scope of the investigation.
- 2.** Schedule timely interviews, in-person, by phone or by videoconference.
- 3.** Communicate proactively with the client regarding the investigation status and work with the client to update the scope and investigation plan if new issues arise.
- 4.** Identify the factual bases or the absence thereof for each of the allegations, by:
 - Reviewing organizational policies and practices, applicable regulations and other relevant information. This might include, for example, emails, internet searches, meeting agendas and minutes, financial records, credit card records, expense records, other business records, timekeeping and pay records, text messages, phone records, computer access records, surveillance video, security badge access data and personnel files.
 - Interviewing and assessing the credibility of key individuals, including the complainant, respondent and subject matter experts, as needed.
 - Interviewing and assessing the credibility of other relevant percipient witnesses with direct, material and relevant information.
- 5.** Consider, evaluate and communicate ongoing legal issues to the client representative, as appropriate.
- 6.** Make and communicate findings to the client representative.
- 7.** When requested, the investigating attorney prepares a thorough, impartial investigation report summarizing the complaint, the investigatory process and the evidence. The report includes an analysis explaining the bases for the factual findings. Every Firm report produced goes through an internal review and proofing process to ensure quality and consistency.

REPRESENTATIVE PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTIGATIONS

The following are brief descriptions of a few representative investigations from various public sector agencies, including counties, cities, special districts, school districts and the state.

- Wide-ranging investigation into a complaint that a department head misappropriated the city's city resources, directed staff to violate wage-hour rules and made derogatory comments based on race and sexual orientation.
- Investigation into a complaint of discrimination based on religion and religious attire against county leadership.
- Investigation into a complaint that the Human Resources Director conducted a biased and flawed internal investigation into complaints that an employee engaged in threatening behavior. The employee alleged harassment and retaliation because of the employee's participation in a colleague's federal lawsuit against the employer.
- Investigation into whistleblower and compliance complaints that the leader engaged in misconduct, including misuse of public funds and employer resources.
- Investigation into a complaint that a city council member engaged in ongoing abusive and threatening conduct toward the City Manager because of gender.
- Police Department investigation into a complaint that a sergeant made inappropriate comments to a police officer, including about the officer's gender.

- Investigation into probation department complaint of gender identity harassment involving sworn officers.
- Investigation into a complaint of sexual harassment and national origin harassment involving sworn officers.
- Investigation into a fire department complaint of preferential hiring and discrimination against executive leadership.
- Investigation into a complaint that the fire chief engaged in race-based decisions on position assignments, budget allocation and grievances.
- Investigation into a complaint of employee trespassing, stealing and recording colleagues without knowledge or consent.
- Investigation into a complaint of a county supervisor's threatening conduct toward staff and disparaging comments about management.
- Investigation into concerns involving an employee's unauthorized computer access of confidential agency information.





ATTORNEY BIOGRAPHIES

Biographies of each Firm attorney.



Leslie D. Ellis
LESLIE D. ELLIS

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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- American Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Association of Workplace Investigators and AWI Institute Certificate Holder (AWI-CH)
- Sacramento Area Human Resources Association
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Women Lawyers of Sacramento

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

University of California, Hastings College of the Law, 2002

Bachelor of Arts

University of California, Berkeley, 1999

Leslie Ellis has extensive experience conducting impartial investigations for private and public organizations throughout California.

Leslie serves as an impartial investigator for sensitive and complex complaints in the workplace and on campus. She investigates a variety of issues, including workplace harassment, fraud and compliance, whistleblower complaints and sexual assault. She frequently investigates matters with all levels of employees and witnesses, including those involving corporate executives, elected officials, board members, the public, sworn officers, physicians, patients, educators, students and legal and human resources professionals.

Prior to founding Ellis Investigations Law Corporation in 2014, Leslie served as in-house employment counsel at Sutter Health from 2007 to 2014. And, from 2001 to 2007, she worked at the nationally recognized employment law department of Paul Hastings, where she counseled and litigated for employers across all industries.

Leslie is based in Sacramento and conducts investigations throughout California.



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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Workplace Investigators and AWI Institute Certificate Holder (AWI-CH)
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Asian/Pacific Bar Association of Sacramento

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

Tulane University Law School,
2016

Bachelor of Arts

University of British Columbia,
2009

TRACY LAW

Tracy Law serves as an impartial investigator of sensitive and complex workplace complaints.

Tracy is a Partner at Ellis Investigations Law Corporation. They conduct investigations into a variety of issues in the workplace and on campus, including complaints of sexual misconduct, discrimination, retaliation, fraud and employee misconduct.

Prior to joining Ellis Investigations Law Corporation in 2019, Tracy litigated on behalf of current and former employees at Bohm Law Group in Sacramento, California. They managed employment cases through all litigation stages. Tracy also taught a course, Privacy in the Workplace, at Tulane University School of Law as an adjunct professor and presented as a speaker at several Tulane University events.

Tracy is based in Sacramento and conducts investigations throughout California.



Kate Svinarich
KATE SVINARICH

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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Workplace Investigators and AWI Institute Certificate Holder (AWI-CH)
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

University of California, Hastings College of the Law, 2012

Bachelor of Arts

University of Colorado Boulder, 2005

Kate Svinarich conducts impartial investigations for public and private employers and education institutions across California.

As an experienced attorney investigator, Kate uses her broad employment law experience to conduct thorough, impartial investigations in the workplace and on campus. She handles a variety of investigations involving all levels of employees and witnesses in both the public and private sectors. Among other things, she investigates complaints of harassment, discrimination, fraud, retaliation and sexual misconduct.

Prior to joining Ellis Investigations Law Corporation in 2020, Kate appeared in state and federal court as well as in administrative proceedings. Between 2013 and 2020, Kate held roles representing employers in diverse employment litigation at firms including Rogers Joseph O'Donnell and Seyfarth Shaw LLP. She has handled a broad range of matters, including discrimination, disability accommodation and wage-hour cases. She also taught legal research to law students at University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

Kate conducts investigations throughout California.



Lucy Li
LUCY LI

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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Workplace Investigators and AWI Institute Certificate Holder (AWI-CH)
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Northern California Employment Round Table (NCERT) Board Member
- Asian/Pacific Bar Association of Sacramento

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

University of California, Davis School of Law, 2018

Bachelor of Arts

University of California, Davis, 2015

Lucy Li conducts impartial investigations into a broad range of issues for private and public organizations throughout California.

Lucy serves as an attorney investigator on employment law, education and compliance matters, including investigating complaints of harassment, discrimination, fraud, retaliation and other misconduct.

Prior to joining Ellis Investigations Law Corporation in 2019, Lucy worked as a Law Fellow with the University of California, Davis, where she assisted with campus investigations into fraud, misconduct and whistleblower complaints. As well, she conducted risk assessments, evaluated internal controls and drafted recommendations for process improvement. Currently, Lucy is a Board Member of the Northern California Employment Round Table (NCERT) which, among other things, assists in providing seminars and conferences on discrimination, harassment and retaliation in employment.

Lucy is based in Sacramento and conducts investigations throughout California.



Karin Bailey
KARIN BAILEY

Karin Bailey serves as an impartial investigator for a broad range of issues in the workplace and on campus.

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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Workplace Investigators and AWI Institute Certificate Holder (AWI-CH)
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

University of California, Davis
School of Law, 2019

Bachelor of Arts

California State University,
Sacramento, 2008

Karin conducts impartial workplace and Title IX investigations into a variety of issues, including compliance concerns and complaints of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, sexual misconduct and other misconduct.

Prior to joining Ellis Investigations Law Corporation in 2022, Karin counseled and litigated on behalf of public and private employers at Kronick, Moskovitz, Tiedmann & Girard from 2018 to 2022. Among other things, she provided counsel on labor and employment issues, encompassing compliance with regulations such as the Fair Employment and Housing Act, Meyers-Milias Act, Brown Act and California Labor Code. She also handled collective bargaining, administrative hearings and disciplinary matters involving public safety employees. As well, Karin previously worked as a Child Support Officer for Sacramento County, where she resolved disputes, negotiated settlements and facilitated hearings. She also served as a paralegal for many years, drafting legal documents and managing immigration cases.

Karin is based in Sacramento and conducts investigations throughout California.



TIMOTHY ZAMANIGAN

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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Workplace Investigators
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

University of California, Davis
School of Law, 2016

Bachelor of Arts

University of California, Davis, 2012

Timothy Zamanigan conducts impartial workplace investigations in both private and public sectors.

In his role as an attorney investigator, Timothy investigates allegations of workplace issues such as harassment, discrimination and retaliation, among others.

Before joining Ellis Investigations Law Corporation, Timothy worked as a Consultant for UC Davis Health's Employee and Labor Relations Department, navigating sensitive employment disputes while applying and interpreting collective bargaining agreements. He also has prior experience in employment law and civil litigation.

Timothy is based in Sacramento and conducts investigations throughout California.



Photo Coming Soon

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ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Workplace Investigators
- California Lawyers Association, Labor and Employment Law Section
- Federal Bar Association
- Lawyers Club of San Diego
- La Raza Lawyers Association
- San Diego County Bar Association

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

University of San Diego, 2023

Master of Public Administration

University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
2019

Bachelor of Arts

University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
2016

Alexis Page

ALEXIS PAGE

Alexis Page conducts impartial workplace investigations for a broad range of issues.

Alexis serves as an attorney investigator for issues in the workplace and on campuses, including harassment, discrimination, retaliation, compliance and other concerns.

Prior to joining Ellis Investigations Law Corporation, Alexis worked at Hanna Brophy, handling complaints involving workers' compensation defense cases. She also has prior experience handling claims involving veterans and their disability compensation.

Alexis is based in San Diego and conducts investigations throughout California.