



## JEFF P. DEGRAFFENREID

PARTNER

WICHITA OFFICE

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### PROFILE

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Jeff DeGraffenreid, a partner in Foulston Siefkin's Wichita office, helps clients develop proactive, creative solutions and risk mitigation strategies for a broad range of business challenges. He advises on workforce development and management issues; helps commercial clients resolve disputes through negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and litigation; handles internal and government investigations; and provides regulatory compliance counsel. Jeff's clients range from large, publicly traded companies to small local businesses. He has considerable experience in the aerospace and aviation, construction, and manufacturing sectors, often serving in the role of outside general counsel.

Jeff first joined Foulston Siefkin in 1992 and left the firm in 2008 to spend nine years at Spirit AeroSystems, the world's largest tier-one supplier of aerospace components. At Spirit, he most recently served as Deputy General Counsel and the legal department's chief of staff. In 2017, he returned to Foulston Siefkin, bringing insight gained from both in-house and outside counsel roles.

Jeff works to earn his clients' trust by developing a deep understanding of their business and strategic objectives. He helps clients identify potential challenges and threats, with a goal to avoid disputes and litigation where possible. When necessary, he has significant experience in state and federal courts and in handling arbitrations across a broad range of substantive legal areas.

Jeff has overseen several significant projects related to enterprise risk management (ERM), and assumed responsibility of that area for Spirit prior to his departure. In private practice, Jeff assists clients in the development of corporate risk mitigation strategies and helps identify legal risks in a broad range of areas, including privacy and data security, trade secrets, and overall corporate compliance.

When needed, Jeff provides counsel on disputes involving supply chain management issues, labor and employment, and securities matters. He advises on business disputes between suppliers and customers, and defends employers in claims involving wrongful discharge, noncompete agreements, and trade secrets. He has handled billion-dollar complex litigation cases, major litigation with labor unions, and collective and class actions arising under both state and federal law.

During his Spirit tenure, he handled a wide range of issues, including complex customer-supplier commercial negotiations, arbitrations, and litigation; labor negotiations; and employment law and workforce issues. Jeff counseled the company through significant employment- and divestiture-related

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lawsuits, including a nine-year age discrimination class action, indemnification litigation arising from M & A activity seeking in excess of \$150 million, and several significant commercial arbitrations. He also successfully managed Spirit's defense in a \$600 million securities class action lawsuit, obtaining a dismissal that was affirmed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit.

Jeff brings significant experience in the strategy and messaging surrounding public disclosure of litigation and other material matters. He understands the complexities associated with public company filings and reporting requirements, and is well-versed in how to respond to governmental investigations. Jeff has supported clients in matters initiated by various federal agencies, including the Department of Justice (DOJ), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Department of Labor (DOL), and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Drawing on his strong relationships with colleagues in the legal community, including local, state and federal courts and judges, and his in-depth procedural knowledge, he is able to see the big picture, navigate the complexities of the legal system for businesses, and connect his clients with the right resources to accomplish their goals.

Jeff is particularly passionate about helping youth develop the character and skills they need to contribute to the bright future of Wichita and its surrounding communities. He is mindful of the challenges the construction and manufacturing industries are facing in workforce development and management, and actively looks for solutions to help recruit, train, and retain the next generation of workers. An active volunteer and past president of the Quivira Council of the Boy Scouts of America, he presently serves on its board and executive committee, and devotes time at the unit level in his hometown of Sedgwick. Jeff is also actively involved in his church and is a longtime supporter of Wichita State University, where he serves on the National Advisory Council.

Jeff and his wife, Kelley, have two sons, Nate and Pierce. Outside of the office, he spends his time in Sedgwick, where he and his wife helped found The Meeting House, a nonprofit community coffee shop with a focus on connecting and enriching the community through youth development programs.

## Education

- Wichita State University (B.A. in Political Science, 1988)
- Washburn University School of Law (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1992)
  - Associate Editor, Washburn Law Journal
  - National Moot Court Team

## Admissions

- Kansas (1992)
- U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas (1992)
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

## PRACTICE AREAS

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- Litigation & Disputes

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- Employment & Labor
- Supply Chain Management
- Government Investigations & White Collar Crime
- Privacy & Data Security
- Trade Secret & Noncompete Litigation
- Mediation/Dispute Resolution

## INDUSTRIES

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- Aviation & Aerospace
- Construction
- Manufacturing

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS, AFFILIATIONS, AND HONORS

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- Selected by peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the areas of Labor and Employment Law, 2007-2008, and Litigation – Labor and Employment, 2020
- “AV” Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell
- Kansas Bar Association
- Wichita Bar Association
- Selected by peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the areas of Commercial Litigation, Medical Malpractice Law – Defendants, Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants, and Professional Malpractice Law – Defendants, 2011 - 2019

## PRESENTATIONS

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### 2020

- The ABCs of Non-Compete Agreements and Other Restrictive Covenants (Foulston Siefkin LLP, HR Training Series)

### 2019

- #MeToo: Lessons Learned (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Kansas Employment Law Institute)

### 2018

- Ethical Issues in Workplace Investigations (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Ethics 2018)
- Recruiting and Retaining Workers: Why Culture Eats Strategy and Employees for Lunch (Foulston Siefkin LLP, HR Training Series)

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- Litigation Update 2018 (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Corporate Counsel Series: Litigation 2018)
- The Weinstein Effect: Addressing Sexual Harassment in Today's Workplace (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Employment Law Institute)
- Workforce Development: Hiring and Managing New Workers (Foulston Siefkin LLP, Employment Law Institute)
- #MeToo: An Employer's Guide to Managing Harassment and Conducting Investigations (Foulston Siefkin LLP, HR Training Series)

### 2016

- Trends in Corporate Investigations, Corporate Litigation Executive Round Table

### 2008

- "What You Need to Know About Employment Agreements," Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, May 2008

### 2007

- "Avoiding Retaliation Claims," Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, May 2007

### 2005

- "Restrictive Covenants/Non-Compete," Foulston Siefkin Employment & Labor Law Seminar, 2005

### 2004

- "The Anatomy of an Employment Lawsuit," Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, 2004
- "Employee Handbook Horror Stories," Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, 2004

### 2003

- "Employer Recordkeeping and Document Retention", Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, 2003

### 2002

- "Religious and Natural Origin Discrimination in the Wake of Recent Terrorist Attacks", Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, 2002

### 2001

- "The Five W's (and an H) of Conducting Workplace Investigations," Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, 2001

### 2000

- "Employee Handbooks," Foulston Siefkin Employment Law Seminar, 2000

## PUBLICATIONS

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### 2008

- “Confessions of a Plaintiff’s Lawyer” Part I and II, Kansas Employment Law Newsletter, 2008

### 2006

- “Alleged kickbacks no bar to valid noncompete,” Kansas Employment Law Letter, Vol. 13, No. 7, October 2006

### 2004

- “‘Specialized training’ not enough to enforce noncompete agreement,” Kansas Employment Law Letter, Vol. 11, No. 6, September 2004

### 2001

- “Retaliation Claims: On the Rise and Dangerous,” Kansas Employment Law Letter, April 2001

### 2000

- “Water Cooler Complaints Do Not a Whistleblower Make,” Kansas Employment Law Letter, Sept. 2000

### 1999

- “I may be totally disabled, but I can still do my job!” Kansas Employment Law Letter, August 1999

### 1991

- “Testing the Constitutionality of Tort Reform with a Quid Pro Quo Due Analysis: Is Kansas’ Judicial Remedy an ‘Adequate Substitute’ for a More Traditional Constitutional Requirement?” Washburn Law Journal, Vol. 31, No. 2, 1991

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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- The Sedgwick Meeting House, Inc., Founding Board Member, Secretary (2015-present)
- Wichita State University Foundation, National Advisory Council (2015-present); Board of Directors
- Boy Scouts of America, Quivira Council, Executive Board of Directors (1997- present); President (2014-2016); Council Commissioner (2011-2014); Vice President/Membership (2008); Treasurer (2004-2006)
- Sedgwick United Methodist Church, Administrative Council Chair (2006-present)
- Fairmount College, Advisory Council
- Exploration Place, Board of Directors (2007-2008)
- Wichita Downtown Rotary, Board of Directors (2005-2008)

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- Arts Partners, Board of Directors (2004-2007)
- Shocker Athletic Scholarship Organization Board of Directors (1999-2005)
- United Way Young Leaders Association, Steering Committee (2002-2004)
- Starkey Foundation, Board of Directors (2001-2004)
- Wichita State University Alumni Association, Board Member (1996-2004), President (2002–2003)
- Beta Theta Pi Fraternity, Chapter Advisor (1992-1999)
- 40 Under 40 Business Leader, Wichita Business Journal
- Leadership Wichita, Wichita Chamber of Commerce