



Nicole Giambarrese

Partner

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Workplace Solutions partner Nicole Giambarrese's unique pedigree and 20 years of experience navigating the most critical employee benefits issues of the day from different perspectives puts her in prime position to counsel clients on this complex and ever-evolving legal and regulatory space. As the former general counsel of the New York City Police Pension Fund (NYCPPF), Nicole deploys decades of insight from the trenches and a 360-degree—and clear-eyed—view of the myriad opportunities and challenges facing employers and employees alike. A large portion of her current practice focuses on counseling local and state governmental employers and retirement systems on employee benefit issues and federal tax compliance on a national scale, as well as supporting and guiding clients with public pension plans.

Nicole is equally well-versed in the space where new technology intersects with tax and the law. As virtually every pension program in the country updates their systems and pivots toward innovation and efficiency, her firsthand experience in all phases of a pension system upgrade—from drafting the request for proposal to contracting, programming, and implementation—informs her ability to help clients maximize success and avoid potential pitfalls. Erudite in both big-picture considerations and detail-oriented enough to cut through the weeds, Nicole regularly provides in-house teams and developers the insight they need to meet legal specifications and build sound processes and tools that help her clients achieve their business goals.

In her previous role as general counsel of NYCPPF, Nicole was responsible for managing the full range of legal operations for the organization, as well as providing legal guidance to its executives. She also managed routine matters such as processing legal papers, domestic relations orders, income execution orders, subpoenas, and delegations of authority; tracked all member and securities litigation and ensured compliance with judicial decisions and settlements; supported agency procurement with drafting and negotiating contracts; and represented the agency in hearings and other proceedings.

While in law school, Nicole was a Public Interest Law Fellow and served as an intern for the Honorable Thomas C. Platt in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, as well as the Honorable Emily Pines in the Commercial Division of the New York State Supreme Court. Prior to studying law, Nicole graduated with honors from St. John's University with degrees in philosophy and government and politics.

Services & Industries

- 403(b) Plans
- 457 Plans
- Benefit Compliance & Correction Programs
- Benefits Communications
- Employee Benefits
- Fiduciary Responsibility & Audits
- Governmental Retirement Plans
- Multi-Employer Plan Issues
- Retirement Plans

Education

- St. John's University (B.A., *cum laude*, 2007)
 - Philosophy
 - Government/Politics
- Touro University Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center (J.D., 2010)

Admissions

- New York

Professional Affiliations

- Co-chair, Benefits Committee of the Tax Committee, National Association of Public Pension Funds

Awards & Honors

- NYPD Lieutenants Benevolent Association Leader of the Finest, 2025
- Exemplary Contributions to the Quality of Student Life
- CALI Award for Excellence in the Study of Trial Practice
- Public Interest Law Fellow, Touro University Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center

Community Involvement

- Board of Directors, Badges Supporting Fallen Officers' Families (Fallen), 2014-2015
- President, Young Professionals Board, Astor Services for Children & Families, 2015-2017

Thought Leadership

April 8, 2026

USPS Postmark Rule Change Creates New Compliance Risks for Employee Benefit Plans

March 24, 2026

Retirement of IRS FIRE System and Mandatory Transition to IRIS

February 13, 2026

Quade | Understanding the DOJ's New Rule on Web Accessibility Under ADA Title II

Quade Blog

February 2, 2026

IRS Modifies Language in the Safe Harbor Special Tax Notice

January 27, 2026

Understanding the DOJ Rule on Web Accessibility (ADA Title II)

January 6, 2026

2026 Is Here—Is Your Plan Ready? Required Amendments, Tax Tables, and TEFRA Reminders

December 4, 2025

New Maximum Dollar Limits for Tax Year 2026: How the Contribution Limits Interact When an Employer Sponsors Multiple Retirement Plans

November 13, 2025

IRS Releases Updated Cost of Living Adjustments and Maximum Dollar Limits for Tax Year 2026

September 23, 2025

IRS Issues Final Regulations on Roth Catch-Up Mandate for Higher Earners Ahead of Implementation Deadline

September 15, 2025

Withholding and Reporting Obligations for Re-Issued Distribution Checks

July 24, 2025

Roth Catch-Up Requirements for Special Catch-Up Contributions in 457(b) Plans

July 21, 2025

Big Beautiful Benefits: A Look at the Employee Benefits Provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill

July 10, 2025

Avoiding Impermissible CODAs in Governmental Pension Plan Reform and Enhancement

June 18, 2025

Uncertainty at the IRS: Why Qualified Pension Plans Should Self-Audit

Speaking Engagements

- Presenter, "The Error of Your Ways: A Haunted Guide to Tax Correction," CALAPRS Compliance Roundtable, October 17, 2025
- Presenter, "Fiduciary Training," NPEA Webinar, July 29, 2025
- Panelist, "Stranger Claims: Examining Pension Peculiarities," NAPPA Legal Education Conference, Denver, CO, June 26, 2025
- New York City Police Department, New York, NY, 2012-2025
Facilitated and conducted dozens of seminars for active members and retirees, as well as the NYPD as an employer, relating to pension benefits, military rights, and disciplinary matters.
- Panelist, "Benefits Coffee Talk," "Roundtable Reloaded: Tech and Legal Strategies in Modernization," and "Distributions: What's Changed?" 2025 Winter NAPPA, Charlotte, NC, February 19-21, 2025
- Moderator, "Preparing for Your Pension or Benefits Administration System Upgrade," NAPPA Legal Education Conference, Fort Lauderdale, FL, June 25-28, 2024
- Moderator, "This is [Not] Sparta! A History of Disability Benefits," NAPPA Legal Education Conference, San Antonio, Texas, June 27-30, 2023
- Panelist, "Benefits Coffee Talk," and "Reporting and Common Correction Concerns," NAPPA Winter Seminar and Senior Counsel Meeting, Tucson, AZ, February 22-24, 2023
- Panelist, "Nothing is Certain Except Death, Taxes, and Re-Employed Retirees," NAPPA Legal Education Conference, Louisville, KY, June 21-24, 2022
- Panelist, "Compliance Pitfalls: New EPCRS, Required Minimum Distributions, Limits on Benefits and Contributions, Excess Benefit Plans and Plan Terminations," NAPPA Seminar, Tempe, AZ, October 5-7, 2021
- Panelist, "Common Plan Errors and Corrections from a Benefit Administration and an EPCRS Perspective," NAPPA Legal Education Conference, virtual, June 22-24, 2021
- Panelist, "Mental Health, Disability Claims and Employee/Employer Accommodations," NAPPA Winter Seminar, Tempe, AZ, February 19-21, 2020

- Moderator, "The Role and Purpose of Litigation in Being a Proper Fiduciary," Institutional Investor Forum, Savannah, GA, June 25-26, 2018
- Panelist, "Politics, Public Opinion, and Pensions," Public Pension Funds Summit, Newport, RI, July 18-20, 2016
- Panelist, "Effecting Positive Change Through Active Monitoring and Litigation," Plan Sponsor Educational Institute, Key West, FL, January 19-22, 2016
- Panelist, "Legal Issues Facing Public Pension Plans," Public Pension Funds Summit, Newport, RI, July 19-22, 2015
- Panelist, "Legal Issues Facing Public Pension Plans," "Municipal Pension and Benefits Seminar, Las Vegas, NV, January 25-27, 2015
- Panelist, "Legal Issues Facing Public Pension Plans," Public Pension Funds Summit, Newport, RI, July 21-23, 2014
- Moderator, "The JOBS Act: How will this affect the Alternatives Industry," Emerging Managers Summit South, Austin, TX, November 19-20, 2013
- Moderator, "Consultants Roundtable," Emerging Managers Summit, Chicago, IL, May 30-June 1, 2012