IceMiller

Vanessa A. Scott

Partner

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Vanessa Scott is a partner in Ice Miller's Workplace Solutions group, where she counsels employers, vendors, and insurers on a wide range of federal tax and ERISA matters. With more than 20 years of experience in the employee benefits space, she provides comprehensive legal guidance to a diverse range of clients across various industries.

Vanessa's practice brings together her proficiency with the technical rules that govern retirement, health, and executive programs and her prior policy experience as a Congressional aide and a Washington, D.C., representative for Fortune 500 companies. She frequently represents her clients' interests before federal agencies, including the Departments of Treasury, Labor, and Health and Human Services, and has testified before members of Congress on employee benefits matters.

Prior to joining Ice Miller, Vanessa acted as internal benefits and executive compensation counsel to a Fortune 100 company, where she designed and oversaw the structure, implementation, and administration of tax-qualified and nonqualified retirement, health, and fringe benefits for domestic and international employees. She applies her in-house legal background to counsel her clients on vendor optimization and achieving sustainable cost savings through strategic legal analysis and contract performance management.

Vanessa served as an adjunct professor for courses in employee benefits and ERISA law at both the Georgetown University Law Center and Howard University School of Law. She is also certified in AI applications for legal practice and Oracle Cloud AI technologies, specifically in using AI tools to streamline employee benefits administration and compliance.

Education

- Duke University (B.A., 1993)
  - Psychology
- Vanderbilt University Law School (J.D., 1997)
- Georgetown University Law Center (LL.M., 2007)
  - Taxation

Services & Industries

- Employee Benefits
- Executive Compensation

- Employee Benefits & ERISA

Admissions

- District of Columbia

Professional Affiliations

- American College of Tax Counsel
- American College of Employee Benefits Counsel
- Former Chair, National Bar Association, Tax Section
- Former Council Director, American Bar Association, Tax Section

Awards & Honors

- *The Best Lawyers® in America* for Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law, 2017
- National Bar Association Tax Excellence Award, 2018
- *Savoy Magazine* Most Influential Black Lawyers in America, 2018
- *Diversity Journal*, Women Worth Watching, 2016
- Washington, D.C. *Super Lawyers*®, Employee Benefits, 2013–2015

Certifications

- Oracle Cloud Infrastructure 2025 Certified Generative AI Professional

Key Matters

- Led strategic benefits and executive compensation legal negotiations for a range of M&A transactions, from small ESOP-owned targets to a proposed $24.6 billon merger and strategic divestiture involving over 5,000 stores and 600,000 employees.
- Executed executive compensation strategy by designing and negotiating senior leadership employment agreements and developing executive compensation communication strategies to foster engagement and compliance.
- Provided counsel to United States employers on compliance with global benefits and compensation regulations for United States and non-United States employees.

Thought Leadership

November 13, 2025
IRS Releases Updated Cost of Living Adjustments and Maximum Dollar Limits for Tax Year 2026

Published In

- “Emerging Coronavirus Issues for Employer Benefit Plans,” *Law360*, March 13, 2020
- “Private Health Insurance Exchanges: Tax and ERISA Issues,” *Tax Notes*, April 3, 2014

- “Agencies Issue FAQs on SBC Requirements,” *Employee Benefit Plan Review*, July 2012
- “How To Buy Health Coverage in an Insurance Exchange,” *Law360*, September 9, 2011
- “Notice Offers Relief from Compensation Deduction Limit for Some Health Insurers,” *BNA Tax Management*, March 28, 2011
- “Service Issues New Guidance on Deduction Limit for Employers,” *BNA Insights*, February 2011
- “Nondiscrimination Rules under PPACA Delayed,” *Employee Benefits News*, January 2011
- “New Rules on Extension of Health Plan Coverage to Children Up to Age 26,” *Employee Benefits News*, May 12, 2010
- “Fallacies of Presumption: Unpacking the Impact of the Section 409A Proposed Regulations on Stock Appreciation Rights Issued by Privately-Held Companies,” *The Tax Lawyer*, Winter 2006

Speaking Engagements

- “AI Tools, Productivity, and Efficiency for In-House Attorneys,” In-House Legal Department, May 2025
- “AI and Employee Benefits: New Frontiers,” In-House Benefits Counsel Network (IBCN), October 2024
- “Health Plan Evolution: Practical Strategies for Navigating Plan Design Issues In 2025,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2024
- “IRS And Department of the Treasury Update,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2024
- “AI Revolution: Practical Uses for Employee Benefit Plans,” American College of Employee Benefits Counsel (ACEBC), October 2023
- “Navigating The New Normal: Unmasking Legal Challenges for Health Plans in a Post-Covid World,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2023
- “Plan Vendor and Administrator Service Agreements,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2022
- “Hot Topics in Health and Welfare Plan Litigation,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2022
- “Surprise Medical Billing Protections and Transparency: Where Do We Go from Here?,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2021
- “Tri-Agency Commentary on Health and Welfare Update,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), November 2020
- “Managing Health and Welfare Plans Prudently: Fiduciary Concerns,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2019
- “Understanding Health Care Plan Vendor Contracting,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2019
- “DOL Audit and Enforcement Activity,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2019
- "The Nuts and Bolts: An Introduction to ERISA Welfare Plans,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2019
- “IRS and Department of Treasury Update,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2018

- “The Nuts and Bolts: An Introduction to ERISA Welfare Plans,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2018
- “Navigating the Audit Process – Health Plans,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2017
- “Current Health Care Tax Issues,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2017
- “The Nuts and Bolts: An Introduction to ERISA Welfare Plans,” American Bar Association Joint Committee on Employee Benefits (JCEB), October 2017
- “The DOL Fiduciary Rule—Present and Future,” Association of Life Insurance Counsel, May 2016
- “The Customer Relationship and the Department of Labor’s 2015 ERISA Fiduciary Re-Proposal,” Practising Law Institute (PLI), July 2015
- “Insights on the Future of DOL and Treasury Oversight of Retirement Plans,” Insured Retirement Institute, June 2015
- “ERISA Basics: Retirement Plans,” American Law Institute and the American Bar Association, October 2012
- “Implementing the Affordable Care Act for Employer Plans: What to Focus on Now,” American Law Institute and the American Bar Association, July 2012
- “The Future of the Affordable Care Act: What the Supreme Court's Decision Means for You,” American Law Institute and the American Bar Association, July 2012
- “Employee Benefits Mergers & Acquisitions Update and The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and the Internal Revenue Code,” American Bar Association Section of Taxation, May 2011
- “Health Plans Update,” American Law Institute and the American Bar Association, December 2010
- “SEC Disclosure and Executive Compensation Arrangements,” Minority Corporate Counsel Association, March 2010
- “Time for a Check-up: What are You Telling Your Clients about Health Reform?,” District of Columbia Bar Association Employee Benefits Committee, May 2010