

## Seyfarth Shaw Adds Team of Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation Attorneys to New York Office

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NEW YORK - (Business Wire) [Seyfarth Shaw LLP](#), one of America's leading full-service law firms, today announced that the firm has significantly expanded its [Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation](#) Department with the addition of [Howard Pianko](#), [Richard G. Schwartz](#) and [Randell Montellaro](#), former partners of Epstein, Becker & Green, P.C., and their experienced team of six additional employee benefits practitioners, including of counsel [Richard I. Loeb](#), associates [Melissa K. Kass](#), [Abigail R. Levy](#), [Kelly Pointer](#) and [Evanthia M. Voreadis](#), and benefits specialist Linda Rentz.

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Pianko, Schwartz and Montellaro's team brings to Seyfarth Shaw's [New York office](#) the capacity to handle the full range of benefits matters—from [retirement](#) and [health and welfare plans](#) through [executive compensation](#), both domestically and [cross-border](#). The combined skills of these professionals add further depth to the firm's national and international capacity; with Pianko leading Seyfarth's newly formed benefits specialty group in [international employee benefits](#) and fiduciary advisory services, Schwartz doing the same with respect to tax-exempt organizations and Montellaro participating in the defined benefit and defined contribution plan specialty practice groups.

[Seyfarth Shaw](#) has one of the largest stand-alone Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation Departments in the country, [comprised of over 60](#) employee benefits and executive compensation lawyers and [30 additional ERISA litigators](#). Seyfarth represents *Fortune* 100 and large private employers in both national and international benefits matters across the globe.

"Howard, Richard and Randy have built one of the best employee benefits teams in New York City, and we are delighted to welcome their group to the firm," said [J. Stephen Poor](#), Chair and Managing Partner of Seyfarth Shaw. "Their addition reinforces our ability to deliver quality compliance-based employee benefits and executive compensation services on the East Coast and internationally."

"The addition of this team to the Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation Department further enhances our group's reputation, gravitas and capabilities in New York, nationally and internationally," said [Peter C. Miller](#), Chair of Seyfarth Shaw's [Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation](#) Department.

"The practice of these attorneys—like our department nationally—is built upon the ever-changing employer-employee relationship, which requires special attention in extraordinary times such as we're experiencing now. We are delighted to have them join us."

"This group of acclaimed employee benefits attorneys shares our firm's value of working collaboratively as a team to deliver value to clients," said [Lorie E. Almon](#), Co-Managing Partner of Seyfarth Shaw's [New York](#) office. "We are thrilled to welcome these leaders of the employee benefits bar to our office."

"On behalf of our entire team, we are thrilled to join Seyfarth Shaw, home to one of the most robust employee benefits and executive compensation practices in the country," [Pianko](#) said. "We look forward to working with our new colleagues and leveraging the national platform and resources as well as cross-border opportunities that Seyfarth Shaw offers our clients."

### Attorney Biographies

**Howard Pianko** (Partner) was Chair of his former firm's Employee Benefits Practice Group. Pianko has advised a wide range of clients on the matters relating to employee benefits, executive compensation, pension investment, plan governance, fiduciary responsibility and benefit related litigation. His work, both in the U.S. and with respect to cross-border and international benefit matters involving domestic and non-U.S. multinationals, has led him to write and lecture extensively on employee benefit topics relating to mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures, pension plan investments, fiduciary laws and executive compensation. He has lectured in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America on cross-border subjects such as global equity compensation programs, internationalizing the ESOP, benefit aspects of U.S. joint ventures and the globalization of defined contribution plans. Recently more of his practice is focused on ERISA plan governance and fiduciary best practices, plan investments and ERISA litigation and claims, and negotiating and drafting senior executive employment, separation, change in control and supplemental retirement benefit agreements in the U.S. and cross-borders. Pianko served as Co-chair

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of the annual Practising Law Institute on Pension Plan Investments (1991-2006) and he is a Charter Fellow of the American College of Employee Benefits Counsel. Pianko received his B.A. (with honors) from City College of New York, and he earned his J.D. and LL.M. (Taxation) at New York University School of Law. He is admitted to the New York state bar.

**Richard G. Schwartz** (Partner) practices all aspects of employee benefits law, including plan design of both pension and welfare plans under ERISA and the Internal Revenue Code. A significant part of his practice involves the special tax and ERISA rules that apply to tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations. In his practice, Schwartz regularly designs and implements "top-hat" plans, non-qualified deferred compensation arrangements, and severance plans developed in connection with reductions-in-force. Schwartz also advises clients with respect to tax-qualified plans, and has significant experience negotiating and resolving tax-qualification defects, fiduciary breaches, and delinquent filing issues under the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor voluntary compliance programs. Additionally, he advises employers on employee benefit implications of corporate affiliations, particularly in the health care industry, such as affiliations among hospitals, physicians and management service organizations. Schwartz also counsels clients on corporate matters relating to tax-exempt and nonprofit organizations. He regularly lectures around the country and authors articles on various aspects of ERISA and employee benefits law. Schwartz earned his B.A. from Queens College, the City University of New York; his J.D. from Boston University School of Law; and his LL.M. (Taxation) from New York University School of Law. He is admitted to the state bars of New Jersey and New York.

**Randell Montellaro** (Partner) has extensive experience in a wide range of employee benefits issues, including qualified and nonqualified plans, welfare plans, and early retirement window programs. Montellaro's experience includes designing employee benefit programs for *Fortune* 500 companies and not-for-profit organizations, including cash balance plans, with a special emphasis on 401(k) and 403 (b) plans, supplemental executive retirement plans and cafeteria plans; and successfully negotiating with the IRS and Department of Labor to resolve qualification and fiduciary issues. Montellaro has authored publications for the Practising Law Institute and the Employee Relations Law Journal. He is also a contributing author to *Employee Benefits Law*, the definitive book in the employee benefits field, and he lectures frequently on varied employee benefit issues and developments. Montellaro received his B.B.A. from Hofstra University and his J.D. from Hofstra University School of Law. He is admitted to the bars of the District of Columbia and New York.

**Richard I. Loebel** (Of Counsel) practices in the areas of employee benefits and executive compensation, and has worked extensively on questions of fiduciary responsibility, counseling clients, litigating fiduciary responsibility claims, and writing on issues relating to fiduciary responsibility under both ERISA and state law. Loebel counsels clients on pension plans, 401(k) plans, ESOPs, prototype IRAs, health plans, severance plans and non-qualified deferred compensation arrangements. He also works on employee benefit issues related to corporate transactions, including "golden parachute" concerns arising from transactions. In addition, Loebel assists both individuals and corporations on executive employment agreements and equity-based compensation, and he advises employers on establishing equity-based compensation arrangements such as stock option plans, employee stock purchase plans, and both short-term and long-term incentive plans. Loebel is a frequent speaker at the local and national level on aspects of employee benefits issues at seminars and professional organizations, and has written a variety of articles on various topics such as prohibited transaction exemptions, retirement benefits and funds, ERISA fiduciary responsibility, employee benefits, and executive compensation. Loebel was Intern to Chief Justice G. Mennen Williams for the Michigan Supreme Court, and Intern to Judge George E. Woods for the Federal District Court. He earned his A.B. (*cum laude*) from Harvard University; his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley; and his J.D. (*summa cum laude*) from the University of Detroit. Loebel is admitted to the state bars of Michigan and New York, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and the U.S. District Courts for the Eastern District and the Western District of Michigan. He is a fellow of the American College of Employee Benefits Counsel.

**Melissa K. Kass** (Associate) practices all aspects of employee benefits matters. She is an alumnus of Michigan State University, where she earned her B.A.; University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, where she earned her J.D.; Georgetown University Law Center, where she earned her LL.M. (Taxation); and Newschool University, where she earned her M.A. (Art History). Kass is admitted to the state bars of Michigan and New York.

**Abigail R. Levy** (Associate) represents clients with respect to qualified plan compliance, including providing advice on the correction of defects in tax-qualified retirement plans and preparing plan submissions to Internal Revenue Service voluntary compliance programs. She also assists clients in reviewing domestic relations orders and QDROs and creates model QDRO procedures. Levy is an alumna of the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned her B.A. (*cum laude*) and Fordham University School of Law, where she earned her J.D. She is admitted to the state bars of New Jersey and New York, and she is admitted to the U.S. District Courts for the Eastern District and Southern District of New York.

**Kelly Pointer** (Associate) assists clients with drafting tax-qualified retirement programs and welfare benefit plans; analyzing tax, accounting, securities and other federal or state law issues involved in implementing these arrangements. She also advises and assists clients with respect to ERISA reporting and disclosure requirements, due diligence, and correcting defects in tax-qualified retirement plans through Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor voluntary compliance programs. She is an alumna of Whitman College, where she earned her B.A., and Seattle University School of Law, where she earned her J.D. (*cum laude*). She is admitted to the New York bar.

**Evanthia M. Voreadis** (Associate) practices all aspects of employee benefits matters, including ERISA reporting and disclosure, voluntary compliance submissions under the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor voluntary compliance programs, and ERISA litigation support. Prior to entering the private practice of law, Voreadis was a litigator with the U.S. Department of Labor in New York. She earned her B.A. from Pace University and her J.D. from St. John's University School of Law. She is admitted to the New York bar.

About Seyfarth Shaw's [Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation Department](#)

Seyfarth Shaw's Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation Department is one of the largest and most diverse employee benefits departments in the country, and is therefore prepared to assist companies with any matter affecting employee benefits or executive compensation. The department's attorneys are experienced in the legal and consulting aspects of employee benefits and executive compensation plans as well as the business concerns faced by companies today. The department works with many of the largest public and private companies in the world and is a nationally recognized leader in its field. The group represent clients at every level—whether regional, national, or international—and has the experience and relationships to service a broad range of industries.

Seyfarth Shaw's [New York Office](#)

Seyfarth Shaw first opened its New York office in 1979 with seven attorneys. Today, the office is home to approximately 100 attorneys, many of whom are also admitted to practice in New Jersey and Connecticut. Practices represented in the New York office include: Bankruptcy, Workouts & Business Reorganization; Commercial Class Action Defense; Commercial Litigation; Corporate; Employee

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Seyfarth Shaw has over 775 attorneys located in nine offices throughout the United States including Chicago; New York; Boston; Washington, D.C.; Atlanta; Houston; Los Angeles; San Francisco and Sacramento; as well as Brussels, Belgium. The firm provides a broad range of legal services in the areas of employee benefits, business services, labor and employment, and litigation. Seyfarth Shaw's practice reflects virtually every industry and segment of the country's business and social fabric. Clients include over 300 of the *Fortune* 500 companies, financial institutions, newspapers and other media, hotels, health care organizations, airlines and railroads. The firm also represents a number of federal, state, and local governmental and educational entities. For more information, please visit [www.seyfarth.com](http://www.seyfarth.com).

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