

Fiona Leppan

Director



Fiona Leppan is a Director in our Employment Law practice. She has extensive experience in the field of employee relations both from a litigation perspective and in terms of strategic planning. Training and development in this field has been a focal point. Fiona has actively trained clients on how to deal with internal disputes and to conduct enquiries and arbitrations. Fiona previously served as Joint Head of the Mining & Minerals sector. She has also established entire dispute resolution processes for a number of mining houses where disputes were dealt with by way of private conciliation and arbitration. Fiona works in various industries including mining, metals, engineering, retail, broadcasting, financial services and the commercial distributive trade. She has also been involved in occupational health and safety work.

Fiona's sector specialities include Employment litigation, individual labour law, collective bargaining law and strategic planning and Occupational Health & Safety in Mining & Minerals.

About Fiona

Fiona began her career as registrar to Mr Justice Margo in the then Supreme Court. In 1983 Fiona joined Webber Wentzel as a Candidate Attorney where she was later promoted to Partner. She subsequently joined Deney's Reitz as a Partner. In 1998, she left Deney's Reitz to establish the law firm Leppan Beech Attorneys. In 2007 Fiona joined Cliffe Dekker (now Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr) as a Director.

Credentials

Education

- BA LLB, University of Witwatersrand
- LLM (with distinction), University of the Witwatersrand
- HDip (Advanced Company Law), University of the Witwatersrand
- Certificate course (Mining and Prospecting Law) with distinction, Mandela School of Law, University of Witwatersrand
- Year of admission as an attorney: 1986
- Registered with the Legal Practice Council

Memberships

- Member of the SAEFA Industrial Relations Forum in the Metals' Industry
- SASLAW

Contact Fiona

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[Fiona on LinkedIn](#)

Expertise

[Employment Law](#)

[Occupational Health & Safety](#)

[Mining & Minerals](#)

[Industrials, Manufacturing & Trade](#)

[Technology & Communications](#)

Location

Johannesburg

Language

English

Experience

- **Ground breaking cases**

Conducted many ground breaking reported cases in the Labour Court, Labour Appeal Court, High Court and Land Claims Court.

- **Lonmin Platinum**

By way of example, she represented the then Lonmin Platinum at the Marikana Commission of Inquiry. She represented Sibanye Gold in the recent 2019 Gold Strike and played an imported role in the resolution of that matter.

- **Occupational health and safety**

Undertaken occupational health and safety work and conducted serious incident and fatal accident inquiries.

- **Developed Land Law**

Developed Land Law as an area of expertise, inclusive of community relocations and land claims.

News

[CCMA commissioners' authority to expedite dispute resolution under the LRA: A discussion of SAA v SACCA and NUMSA](#)

In 2020, South African Airways (SAA) underwent a restructuring exercise, which involved large-scale retrenchments and significant changes to terms and conditions of employment, impacting approximately 4,700 employees.

[The over-sensitivities of an individual employee do not amount to harassment or unfair discrimination](#)

In the recent decision of *La Foy v Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and Others* 1952/2017, the Labour Court dismissed an application by an employee who sought relief as a result of alleged harassment by her employer, together with a plea for the reassignment of her job responsibilities, and a claim for compensation.

[Blowing the whistle: Informant reform in South Africa](#)

Justice Minister Ronald Lamola has promised greater protection for whistleblowers in South Africa, with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development releasing a discussion paper on proposed reform and opening recommendations for public comment.

[Webinar - Employment impact: State of national disaster: Electricity](#)

Employers need to consider the impact that loadshedding and increased disruptions in electricity supply may have on the workplace.

[Hybrid Event Recording | Economic recession, State of Disaster and business: Navigating the tide](#)

A second national state of disaster has been declared in the space of three years this time due to constrained electricity supply at a time of imminent economic recession and a significant increase in liquidations.

Videos

[Webinar Recording | Health and Safety in the Workplace webinar series: COIDA](#)

Health and safety is an important component of all workplaces. Watch the first webinar discussion of our Health and Safety series.

[How well do women fare in the South African labour market](#)

Employment Director Fiona Leppan joined Newzroom Afrika to take a look at whether South African employers are being sufficiently receptive to the additional burden of family responsibility that has been introduced to women working at home during lockdown.

Gender parity in the workplace

Fiona Leppan, Director in the Employment practice joined Morning Live on SABC 2 to discuss gender parity in the workplace.

Podcasts

Criminal charges laid by employer? An employer can still take disciplinary action!

The Labour Court held that criminal charges laid by the employer against an employee can never stand in the way of that employer subjecting the employee to a disciplinary enquiry in the workplace in respect of the same charges.

Can an employee be dismissed for refusing to obey an instruction to work overtime?

Recently the labour court handed down a judgment in which it had to consider whether dismissal for insubordination was an appropriate sanction for employees who refused to obey an instruction to work overtime. The case raised important questions relating to overtime and highlighted an important aspect of section 10 of the BCEA. Employment Law experts Director Fiona Leppan and Associate Kgodisho Phashe, joined CDH Conversations to discuss the recent judgement.

Four day work week

During her interview with 702, to discuss the global trend of a four-day work week, Fiona Leppan, Director in our Employment Law practice noted that, "doing collaborative sessions with employees and daily check-ins with them, where you are clearly defining their daily and weekly deliverables to make sure they are all met."

Firefighter injured on Duty – A closer look into inherent job requirements and reasonable accommodation

Recently, the Constitutional Court decided the case of Adam Damons v City of Cape Town, where an employee firefighter who was injured at work and sustained a disability (as a result of the employer's non-compliance with safety procedures) sought a position as a Senior Firefighter but was inhibited by the employer's Fire and Rescue Advancement Policy. The case raised important questions relating to unfair discrimination in the workplace, the place of the inherent requirements of the job defence and the scope of reasonable accommodation

Religious and cultural wear at work

Religious and cultural expression is of paramount importance among South Africans, and as we come down from the high of Heritage Day on 24 September, the conversation around religious, cultural, or political clothing in the workplace has come to the fore. Fiona Leppan, Director in our Employment Law practice delves into how the South African constitutions strikes a balance between cultural expression and workplace dress code policies.

[All news by Fiona Leppan →](#)

Recognition

- Chambers Global 2018–2024 ranked Fiona Leppan in Band 2 for employment.
- The Legal 500 EMEA 2022–2024 recommend Fiona for mining.
- The Legal 500 EMEA 2019–2024 recommended her as a leading individual for employment, and recommended her from 2012–2018.