



Karen C. Carrera, AWI-CH

Partner and Head of Investigations Practice

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Practice Areas

- Workplace Investigations
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- Labor and Employment

Bar Admission

- California
- United States District Court, Northern District of California

Education

- University of California College of the Law, San Francisco (Formerly UC Hastings), J.D.
- Loyola Marymount University, B.A., *Cum Laude*

Experience

Karen Carrera conducts workplace investigations for both public and private employers in response to employee complaints of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, bullying and other alleged employee misconduct. Karen also provides diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and harassment prevention trainings and consultations for companies, government agencies and individuals, in both English and Spanish. She holds a certificate from the Association of Workplace Investigators (AWI) and is an active member. She also holds a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Certificate from the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University.

Prior to becoming an investigator and trainer, Karen was a Plaintiffs' side employment law litigator at Villegas Carrera, Inc. This uniquely qualifies her to determine risk and see where employers are vulnerable to being sued by employees. Before Villegas Carrera, Karen was a Deputy City Attorney and litigator with the San Francisco City Attorney's Office, where she filed lawsuits against property owners who violated San Francisco's housing, health, fire and police codes. Karen also formerly worked as the supervising attorney at Legal Aid of Marin and La Raza Centro Legal where she litigated employment and housing cases, and managed a diverse staff, including volunteers. She facilitated community outreach meetings with the Latino community and services agencies and conducted bilingual trainings and drafted Spanish and English self-help manuals.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

- *Best Practices for Cost-Effective, Efficient, and Defensible Workplace Harassment Investigations*, California Public Employers Labor Relations Association, Annual Training Conference, November 20, 2025.
- *EEOC Civil Rights Enforcement in a Changing Landscape*, California Public Employers Labor Relations Association, Annual Training Conference, November 19, 2025.
- *A Review of the EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Workplace Harassment and Its Value to Workplace Investigators*, CLA Public Law Journal, Spring 2025.

- The Workplace Investigator's Blog, <https://conta.cc/40bCMLv>, RPLG Quarterly Newsletter, January 15, 2025–present.
- *Effective Communications with Limited English Speakers*, California Lawyer's Association, Annual Employment Law Conference, July 2024.
- Crossing Borders: Unique Aspects of Investigations Involving Immigrants, Association of Workplace Investigators, September 13, 2023.
- *Best Practices to Avoid Legal Risks for DEI Programs*, Bar Association of San Francisco, November 16, 2022.
- Quarterly Newsletter & Blog, Carrera Workplace Solutions, carreraworkplace.com/Blog, 2019-2024.
- Commentator on employment law issues affecting Spanish speaking community, Telemundo, Channel 48, 2019–present.
- Lecturer in Law, Berkeley School of Law, University of California, August–November 2018.
 - Legal Research & Writing, L.L.M. Legal Research and Writing Department.
- *Wage & Hour Law and the Immigrant Low Wage Worker*, Marin Trial Lawyers Association, 2015.
- *Work Life Law for Women in Tech*, Google, 2015.
- *Representing Immigrant Clients in Class Actions*, S.F. Trial Lawyers Association, 2014.
- *U-Visas and Immigrant Clients in Employment Law*, Marin Trial Lawyers Association, 2013.
- *Employment Law Overview*, Legal Aid of Marin, 2010.
- *Wage & Hour Law and the Immigrant Low Wage Worker*, PLUS Conference, 2009.
- Adjunct Professor University of California College of the Law San Francisco, September 2009–2019.
 - Classes taught: Representing Spanish Speaking Clients in Employment Law, Interviewing and Counseling Clients, Negotiation and Mediation Strategies, Legal Writing and Research.

PRESS AND AWARDS

- San Francisco Minority Bar Coalition, recipient of the Unity Award, for "Outstanding Service to the Legal Community," 2023. Nominated by the Marin County Women Lawyers.
- County of Marin, Certificate of Recognition, Business Citizen of the Year, presented by Katie Rice, District 2 Supervisor, and Damon Connolly, September 24, 2021.
- Spirit of Marin Award – Business Professional of the Year, presented by Bank of Marin, 2021.
- Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition to Karen C. Carrera, The Hon. Jared Huffman, for entrepreneurial accomplishments and civic involvement, 2021.

- Certificate of Recognition, California State Legislature, Business Citizen of the Year, The Hon. Assemblyman Marc Levine, 2021.
- Certificate of Appreciation, Marin County Board of Supervisors, Business Citizen of the Year, 2021.
- Association of Workplace Investigators Certificate Holder (AWI-CH), February 2020 to the present.
- Hero Award, AIDS Legal Referral Panel, for 15 years of service, 2019.
- Profile of Karen Carrera, Plaintiff Magazine, November 2017.
- Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition to Karen C. Carrera, The Hon. Jared Huffman, in honor of ongoing commitment to the Latino population in Marin County, 2015.
- State of California Senate, Certificate of Recognition to Karen C. Carrera, The Hon. Mike McGuire, State Senator, for outstanding leadership and professional skills, 2015.
- Hispanic Business Professional of the Year, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, for outstanding leadership, commitment, and professional skills in representing Latino immigrants, 2015.
- Legal Services Corporation, Certificate of Appreciation, for extraordinary commitment to providing equal access to justice through pro bono work with California Rural Legal Assistance, 2015.
- Community Service Award Recipient and 2013 Graduation Keynote Speaker – Hastings College of the Law, La Raza Law Student's Assoc. May 2013.
- Outstanding Benefactor Award, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, Sacramento, California, "for providing access to justice to low-income workers in California". September 2008.
- California Assembly, Certificate of Recognition for providing volunteer legal services to low-income people in Marin, May 2006.
- Wiley E. Manual Award from the State Bar of California in recognition of pro bono work. 2004 and 2006.
- San Francisco Minority Bar Coalition, recipient of the Unity Award, for "Outstanding Service to the Legal Community," 2004.
- Certificate of Appreciation, City of San Francisco, Hon. Willie Brown, for service to the residents of the Mission and Ingleside Districts as part of the City Attorney's Code Enforcement Team, May 7, 2002.
- Chief of Police, Commendation from Chief Fred H. Lau, in appreciation for commitment and service to the residents of San Francisco, May 7, 2002.

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- Citizens Advisory Panel, Tiburon Police Department, appointed April 2023.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force – Tiburon Town Council – appointed March 2021 to present.
- Association of Latino Marin Attorneys (ALMA) – Current Co-President of the Board of Directors, December 2022-present.
- Association of Workplace Investigators (AWI) – Member, June 2019 – present.
- Marin County Women Lawyers Association –Board of Directors, 2019-2023.
- Marin Trial Lawyers Association – Board of Directors, June 2018– present; Former Copresident, 2018-2019, Secretary 2024-2025.
- Canal Alliance Board of Directors, Jan. 2014-February 2019.
- Equal Rights Advocates (ERA) –Board of Directors (2008-2014).
- ACLU of Northern California, Board of Directors (2006-2008).
- Aids Legal Referral Panel (ALRP) – Volunteer Attorney, 2005-present.
- General Counsel – Reed Schools Foundation, Tiburon, CA, June 2004-June 2006.
- La Raza Centro Legal, Board of Directors, (2000-2003).
- Bay Area Legal Aid, Board of Directors (1999-2000).