

William D. Jewett

Partner

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Bill maintains a sophisticated employee benefits and executive compensation practice advising employers of all sizes on a wide variety of benefits and compensation plan design and legal compliance matters. Bill regularly advises on deferred compensation arrangements for both taxable and tax-exempt clients. Bill also assists clients in mergers and acquisitions.

Bill has extensive experience working with pension plan investments, including compliance work for asset managers. A thought leader on ERISA compliance matters, he has focused his ERISA practice on fiduciary and prohibited transaction issues, as well as advising clients on investment management agreements, derivatives, securities lending, prime brokerage arrangements, and financial products such as stable value funds.

Bill works collaboratively with clients to identify and assess risks and opportunities and enjoys explaining legal issues and strategies for handling them in a practical, understandable way.

Prior to joining Verrill, Bill was a partner at a global law firm, where he worked with a wide range of clients on ERISA, employee benefits and executive compensation issues. Before embarking on a legal career, Bill was an associate professor in the English Department at Yale University.

Education

- Yale Law School (J.D.)
- Yale University (Ph.D., M.Phil.)
- Yale College (B.A.)

Bar Admissions

- Massachusetts

Memberships

Services/Industries

- Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation
- Higher Education
- Tax & Nonprofit

- American Bar Association

Honors

- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® under Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law in Boston, Massachusetts (2024)
- Legal 500 (2016, 2018)
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (2015-2021)

To learn more about third-party ratings and rankings, and the selection processes used for inclusion, [click here](#).

Publications & Podcasts

July 5, 2023

Establishing Practices and Procedures to Support Retirement Plan Self-Correction

February 7, 2023

More to Consider Concerning the FTC's Proposed Rule Prohibiting Non-Competition Clauses

September 6, 2022

Amending Your Retirement Plans this Year for SECURE Act and CARES Act Changes

December 6, 2021

2021 Year End Employee Benefit Plan Amendments

August 19, 2021

Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation 2021 Summer Client Advisory

Blog Posts: Benefits Law Update

Verrill's Benefits Law Update blog delivers timely insights and practical guidance on the ever-evolving landscape of employee benefits and executive compensation. Our blog provides up-to-date analysis and commentary on a wide range of topics to provide timely updates and commentary on developments in law affecting employee benefit plans and executive compensation arrangements.

February 14, 2025

Solo 401(k) Plans: A Quick Fix-It Guide

"Solo 401(k)" is a marketing term used for a 401(k) plan that is adopted by a sole proprietor or an incorporated business with no employees other than the owner.

These plans offer a greater retirement savings opportunity compared to...

September 16, 2024

A Brief Guide to Qualified Disclaimers for Retirement Plan Administrators

A “qualified disclaimer” is a tax-effective way to refuse a transfer of property that would otherwise occur on someone’s death. From time to time, retirement plan administrators may be contacted by a beneficiary who wants a deceased participant’s benefit...

May 1, 2024

Why Is There No IRS Correction Program for Non-Governmental 457(b) Plans?

This post examines excess deferrals under non-governmental 457(b) plans, including the approved method for correcting them and the penalty for failing to correct them, to make the case for a change in IRS policy on correcting administrative errors in...

November 2, 2023

The Department of Labor Proposes Its New Fiduciary Rule

On October 31, 2023, the Department of Labor published a new proposed regulation (the “ Proposed Rule ”) defining “investment advice” for purposes of determining when someone advising an ERISA plan or participant or an IRA owner is a...

June 27, 2023

Establishing Practices and Procedures to Support Self-Correction of Operational Failures

The self-correction of retirement plan operational failures under IRS correction principles has been conditioned upon a plan sponsor’s establishment of compliance practices and procedures since the creation of the Employee Plans Compliance Resolution System (“EPCRS”) 25 years ago. This...

June 6, 2023

Reasonable Compensation Under ERISA: Thoughts on Two Recent Cases

Two recent court decisions bring into focus two seldom-asked questions about the reasonable compensation requirement under ERISA. When must an ERISA plan’s service provider compensation be reasonable? And why shouldn’t a plan fiduciary be able to receive reasonable compensation...

January 3, 2023

Next Steps for Making Collective Investment Trusts Available to More Retirement Plans

Collective investment trusts (“CITs”) have become an increasingly popular choice for 401(k) plan investment menus over the past decade, consistent with a trend toward lower-cost investment options that has been driven, in part, by widespread litigation. However, certain technical...

July 27, 2022

DOL Proposes Amendments to QPAM Exemption

On July 27, 2022, the Department of Labor (DOL) proposed a set of amendments to Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption 84-14, the so-called “QPAM

Exemption,” which permits an investment fund [1] holding assets of ERISA plans and IRAs that is...

March 7, 2022

How to Shoot Yourself in the Foot with Your SPD

Benefit plan sponsors sometimes send out Summary Plan Descriptions (SPDs) having given too little thought to the legal consequences. Two recent cases illustrate how an organization can end up in serious and costly litigation based on statements that did...

October 20, 2021

Thoughts on the DOL's Proposed ESG Regulation

The latest installment in the regulatory back-and-forth over the investment of ERISA-governed retirement plan assets based on environmental, social, and corporate governance (“ESG”) factors arrived on October 14, 2021 in the form of a newly proposed regulation on “

August 19, 2021

Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation 2021 Summer Client Advisory

[Click here to view as a PDF.](#) This Client Advisory summarizes developments in the law governing employee benefit plans prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We explain what these developments mean for plan sponsors and highlight the need to adopt...

June 25, 2021

Faculty Retirement Incentive Programs: What Does the Law Permit?

A recent survey of full-time college and university faculty found that, as of the beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year, approximately 25% of those surveyed expected to retire later than they had anticipated before the onset of the COVID-19...

March 8, 2021

Webinar: The Effect of COVID-19 on Employee Benefit Plans – Making Sense of the Abundance of New Legislation and Guidance

Join us on Thursday, March 18 for the next segment in the virtual series that comprises Verrill's 2021 Employment Law Annual Update! For this segment, employee benefits attorneys Karen Hartford, Bill Jewett, and Chris Lockman will examine the various...

February 2, 2021

Partial Plan Terminations – An Update

In our April 2020 post, we detailed how employee layoffs can cause a qualified retirement plan to undergo a “partial termination,” resulting in required 100% vesting of the affected employees' benefits. As 2020 drew to a close, with...

January 18, 2021

Reporting Deferred Compensation on Form 990

Tax-exempt organizations often provide deferred compensation to their officers, key employees, and most highly compensated employees. Like current compensation payable to such employees, deferred compensation must be

reported annually on Form 990, Schedule J. For the most part, Schedule...