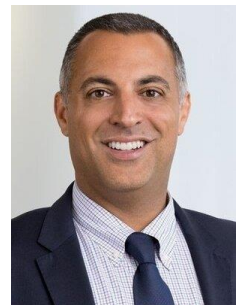


Crowell & Moring Hires Employment Atty From Ballard Spahr

By **Gina Kim**

Law360 (September 17, 2026, 11:38 PM EDT) -- Crowell & Moring announced Thursday that it has hired a former Ballard Spahr lawyer to join its labor and employment group, bringing years of experience handling wage-and-hour class actions and other complex employment-related issues on behalf of some of the biggest companies in the country.

Nima Darouian joined Crowell & Moring as a partner in Los Angeles, the firm said. At his new gig with Crowell, Darouian will represent employers in high-stakes class actions, matters involving representative actions and Private Attorneys General Act claims, as well as single-claimant disputes across different industries, according to the firm's announcement.



Nima Darouian

"Nima's experience will help us continue to build our employment litigation capabilities in California," Trina Fairley Barlow, co-chair of Crowell's labor and employment group, said in a press statement Thursday. "His success counseling employers on a broad range of workplace issues, combined with his deep roots in one of the country's most complex and rapidly changing markets, will be a real benefit to our clients in California and nationwide."

Darouian advises clients on best practices regarding hiring, compensation, promotions, meal and rest breaks, arbitration agreements, performance evaluations, corrective actions, leaves and terminations, the firm said. His clientele comes from a wide range of industries including retail, healthcare, hospital, transportation, banking and manufacturing, according to Crowell & Moring.

Crowell & Moring's announcement said Darouian represents employers in single-plaintiff cases involving allegations of harassment, retaliation and wrongful termination. He also represents defense companies in matters concerning breach of employment contracts, breach of duty of loyalty, employee trade secret misappropriation, defamation, invasion of privacy, unfair competition, and the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, according to the announcement.

"Nima complements well our established team of wage-and-hour litigators who have handled some of the most novel wage-and-hour class and collective action litigations in recent years," Kris Meade, co-chair of Crowell's labor and employment group, said in the announcement.

Darouian graduated from Loyola Marymount University and received his law degree from Loyola Law School.

Darouian comes to Crowell & Moring after spending over three years with Ballard Spahr, which he joined in summer 2023, following the collapse of Barber Ranen and the short-lived Daugherty Lordan LLP, the firm that was created afterward.

He was among more than 100 employment attorneys who decamped from Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith in May 2023 to join Barber Ranen. The firm, founded by John Barber and Jeffrey Ranen, quickly shuttered after emails containing racist and misogynistic language they wrote while at Lewis Brisbois were made public, and they resigned. Shortly after Barber and Ranen left the fledgling firm, the remaining former Lewis Brisbois lawyers rebranded under the name, Daugherty Lordan.

Nearly two years after joining Ballard Spahr, Darouian was promoted to partner at the firm's Los Angeles office in early 2025. Later that year, he teamed up with his fellow Ballard Spahr colleagues to defend Home Depot from a proposed class action by a former retail worker who claimed the company was violating Washington state labor laws by banning its lowest-earning employees from moonlighting at second jobs.

Last month, Darouian, alongside his Ballard Spahr colleagues, filed a summary judgment bid on Home Depot's behalf, arguing the plaintiff never signed any noncompetition agreement, never wanted a second job, and was never harmed by any company policy.

"I am thrilled to join Crowell & Moring and build on the strong foundation the labor & employment group has established in California," Darouian said in a press statement Thursday. "The firm's collaborative culture and deep bench across complementary practice areas provide a strong platform for helping clients navigate the state's complex employment landscape."

Crowell & Moring's announcement about Darouian's arrival comes a day after the firm revealed that it hired two former enforcement attorneys from the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission for its antitrust and competition group.

Former DOJ Antitrust Division attorney Rebecca Valentine joined Crowell & Moring as a partner in Washington, D.C., while former FTC attorney Ryan Hrasch is set to join the firm as senior counsel in New York.

--Additional reporting by Alison Knezevich, MJ Koo and Lynn LaRowe. Editing by Janice Carter Brown.