

# Cristopher D. Sinan

Counsel | Seattle

Phone: 206.447.8962

Email: [cris.sinan@foster.com](mailto:cris.sinan@foster.com)



## Overview

Cris advises employers, administrators and trustees on the design, administration and termination of ESOPs, retirement and executive compensation arrangements, and health and welfare benefit plans. In addition to his work with ESOPs, 401(k) and pension plans, Cris's experience includes advising trustees of multiemployer Taft-Hartley plans that provide union retirement, health and supplemental benefits.

Cris regularly counsels his clients concerning the application of ERISA, federal tax and other rules, including fiduciary obligations under ERISA and HIPAA compliance. He also helps navigate and respond to U.S. Department of Labor and Internal Revenue Service Audits. Cris's practice also includes identifying and mitigating employee benefits and executive compensation issues in mergers, acquisitions and financial transactions.

After earning his J.D. at the American University Washington College of Law, Cris earned his Master of Laws in Taxation and Certificate in Employee Benefits Law from Georgetown University Law Center. He has also served as benefits counsel to a Fortune 50 financial services company, as a law clerk for the U.S. Department of Justice and as a legal extern for the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Before he became an attorney, Cris was a Child Protective Services Social Worker for the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families.

Cris is a member of the Western Pension & Benefits Council Seattle Chapter and was a Board Member and Spring Seminar Co-Chair for three years. He also serves as an Advisory Board Member for the American Bar Association's Section of Taxation's LGBTQ+ Lawyers in Tax Forum. Cris is a member of QLaw: The LGBTQ+ Bar Association of Washington, The National LGBTQ+ Bar Association, and the American Bar Association. As pro bono public service, Cris has represented domestic violence survivors in temporary restraining order hearings, represented court-appointed special advocates and guardian ad litem in foster care cases and advised small charities about their employee benefit plans. He has also been active on the board of the WCL Lambda Law Alumni Association.

## Areas of Focus

- [Tax](#)
- [Charitable & Tax-Exempt Organizations](#)
- [Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation](#)
- [Employee Stock Ownership Plans](#)
- [Federal Tax](#)
- [Property Tax](#)
- [State & Local Tax](#)

## Admissions

- Washington, 2018
- District of Columbia, 2016
- Maryland, 2014
- New Jersey, 2013
- Virginia, 2011

## Education

- J.D., American University Washington College of Law (*magna cum laude*)
- LL.M. in Taxation, Georgetown University Law Center
  - Certificate in Employee Benefits Law
  - CALI Excellence for the Future Award: ERISA Plan Termination & Withdrawal Liability
- M.S.W., University of Washington, Agency Administration and Child Welfare Specializations
- B.A., University of North Texas, Psychology

## Professional Activities

- American Bar Association, Section of Taxation LGBTQ+ Lawyers in Tax Forum, Advisory Board Member, September 2022-Present
- Bread for the City, Pro Bono Attorney, July 2016-July 2018
- CASA of Baltimore City, Court Appointed Special Advocate, May 2014-November 2015
- Clemency Project, Pro Bono Attorney, March 2016-January 2017
- Family Law CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of King County, Pro Bono Attorney, September 2018-December 2019
- Friends of Reservoir Hill, Member of the Board, April 2017-June 2018
- Income Tax Assistance Program of Northern Virginia, Volunteer Income Tax Preparer, January 2012-April 2012
- King County Superior Court, Juvenile Diversion Coordinator, November 2007-August 2008

- Western Pension & Benefits Counsel (Seattle Chapter), Board Member & Spring Seminar Co-Chair, 2022-2025

## News & Insights

### News

[Cris Sinan Joins Foster Garvey as Counsel in Tax & Benefits Practice](#)

[10.01.25](#)

### Events

["M&A Basics for Growing an ESOP Company," The ESOP Association Northwest Chapter 2026 Spring Conference](#)

[03.12-03.13.2026](#)

## Connect with Cris

**Phone** 206.447.8962

**Email** [cris.sinan@foster.com](mailto:cris.sinan@foster.com)

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