

Michael L. Stevens

Partner

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Clients rely on Mike to navigate the complex and evolving securities, tax and governance issues surrounding executive compensation programs. Mike handles stock plans, executive employment agreements and deferred compensation arrangements and has extensive experience with compensation issues in M&A and other corporate transactions.

Mike Stevens is a partner with Alston & Bird's Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation Team. He focuses on executive compensation matters, with a particular emphasis on tax, securities and corporate governance issues relating to stock plans, incentive compensation arrangements, executive employment agreements and deferred compensation. He represents companies, compensation committees and individual executives and frequently advises clients on executive compensation issues relating to mergers and acquisitions and other corporate transactions.

Mike is a co-author of *The Compensation Committee Handbook*, 4th Edition and has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*[®] since 2013. He is a frequent speaker and writer on a variety of matters relating to executive compensation, including Sections 409A, 280G and 162(m) of the tax code, SEC disclosure and registration requirements, corporate governance issues and institutional investor considerations.

Mike received his J.D., with distinction, in 1993 from Emory University School of Law, where he was an editor of the *Emory Law Journal*, elected to the Order of the Coif and received the Lexis Excellence in Writing Award. He received his undergraduate degree, with high honors, in 1990 from Emory University, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Representative Experience

Mr. Stevens serves as special executive compensation counsel to many publicly traded companies, closely-held businesses, and individual executives, including:

- One of the nation's preeminent energy services companies.
- The world's largest home improvement retailer.
- A national real estate investment and service company.
- One of the Southeast's largest independent commercial banking organizations.
- The executive team of a leading real estate development company.
- The CEO of a leading ultra-premium culinary appliance company.
- The CFO of the world's leading health care diagnostics company.

Transactional

- Counsel to a global private equity fund on executive compensation issues in connection with its \$3.9 billion acquisition of a telecommunications equipment company.

- Counsel to a leading provider of technology and business solutions on equity compensation, change in control agreements and related tax issues in connection with its \$2.6 billion acquisition by an asset management company in a going-private transaction.
- Counsel to a leading hospital services company regarding retention and severance arrangements and “golden parachute” tax planning in connection with a \$1.7 billion merger transaction.
- Counsel to the management of one of the nation’s largest optical companies relating to executive investment and equity incentives in connection with an acquisition by a private equity investor.

Publications & Presentations

Publications

- “Reassessing Hedging Policies in Light of New SEC Rules,” *Corporate Board Member*, October 15, 2019.
- “Tips Regarding Executive Compensation Disclosures, Rules,” *Bloomberg BNA*, April 16, 2014.
- *The Compensation Committee Handbook*, 4th ed., Wiley, April 2014.

Professional & Community Engagement

- National Association of Stock Plan Professionals
- National Center for Employee Ownership
- State Bar of Georgia, Employee Benefits Section

Education

- Emory University (J.D., 1993)
- Emory University (B.A., 1990)

Admitted to Practice

- Georgia

Related Services

Tax | Employee Benefits & Executive Compensation | Corporate & Business Transactions | Capital Markets & Securities