

FAIRBRIDGES

Since 1812

EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- ◆ Employment Advisory & Compliance
- ◆ Workplace Relations & Dispute Resolution
- ◆ Executive Employment & Business Transitions



FAIRBRIDGES

Since 1812

Fairbridges is a leading African law firm providing expert corporate and commercial legal services across South Africa and beyond.

With offices in Cape Town and Johannesburg, we assist both local and multinational companies - our areas of expertise include commercial legal advisory, transactional work, commercial drafting, competition law (regulatory filings and litigation), intellectual property law, insurance and medical malpractice, healthcare regulatory advice, and commercial litigation.

Our firm's history - established in 1812 - provides us with a rich legacy of institutional knowledge and a commitment to service excellence. This deep-rooted experience enables us to offer clients tailored, professional, and high-quality legal services at competitive rates. At Fairbridges, we pride ourselves on our ability to adapt to the evolving legal environment, embrace innovation and uphold the highest standards of the legal profession.

Our dedicated team of experienced attorneys are committed to delivering results that meet the diverse needs of our clients, ensuring their business success both locally and internationally.

- **Africa's first** full-service firm – est. 1812; Johannesburg since 1904.
- **Level 1 B-BBEE**, 30 % black equity; all-female leadership team.
- **60+ practitioners** across Cape Town & Sandton and total staff complement of 120.

"... the firm has always exemplified all that is best in the practice of the law: reliability, integrity, high ethical standards, devotion to the interest of the client and professional expertise."

Michael M. Corbett | Former Chief Justice of South Africa, who steered South Africa's judiciary through constitutional transition (1989-1996)



Fairbridges is a member firm and global board participant of the TerraLex Law Network which spans 200 jurisdictions.

On-the-ground reach. Our TerraLex colleagues in every major African energy market maintain day-to-day working relationships with regulators, port authorities and commercial operators - so import licences, pipeline servitudes and environmental sign-offs move fast and discreetly.

Issue containment, not escalation. Because local counsel already know the officials and statutes in play, potential bottlenecks are addressed before they become high-stakes disputes - saving both time and reputational capital.

No price-gouging. Fees are benchmarked across the network and billed through a single South African point of contact, giving you cost visibility and leverage that “big-firm branch offices” can’t match.

Priority escalation. As Regional Vice-Chair for Africa & Middle East Bob Groeneveld sits inside our partnership, thus ensuring the right team is mobilised swiftly.

KEY CONTACT



DAVID SHORT

DIRECTOR

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LABOUR LAW

The Employment Law Department at Fairbridges was established in the early 1990s. Over the decades, our department has significantly contributed to the development of Employment Law jurisprudence in South Africa. We represent a diverse range of clients, including State entities, multinational corporations, small to medium enterprises, individuals, and trade unions.

This extensive experience has provided us with deep insights into handling various employment-related matters. The department is led by David Short, who joined the firm in 2006. David brings over 30 years of specialised experience in Employment Law and has consistently embraced the principles of transformation and skills transfer throughout his tenure.

Our department is fully transformed, reflecting the diverse workforce of South Africa, in line with the objectives of the Employment Equity Act. Our Employment Law Department is equipped to provide comprehensive services across every aspect of Employment Law. The professionals in our team are highly proficient in drafting a full range of policies and legal documents, including court pleadings, which in appropriate cases, may eliminate the need to engage external counsel for routine employment matters. All junior members of the Employment Law Department have completed their articles of clerkship at the firm and have been mentored in Employment Law, ensuring a continuity of excellence and expertise.

We pride ourselves on delivering world-class service to our clients, maintaining service levels that align with the standards of the International Association of Lawyers, of which Fairbridges is the sole member in South Africa. Our attorneys are also skilled in trial advocacy and frequently appear before various employment law tribunals, achieving exceptional results.

Additionally, David Short occasionally serves as an Acting Judge of the Labour Court, further underscoring our department's expertise and authority in the field.

LABOUR LAW TEAM



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OUR APPROACH

At Fairbridges, the Employment Law Department is committed to delivering legal services that are not only of the highest quality but also aligned with our core values of transformation, mentorship, and service excellence. By combining our deep expertise with a commitment to transformation and mentorship, we ensure that our clients receive not only exceptional legal representation but also the benefit of a team that is reflective of and responsive to the needs of South Africa’s diverse population.

COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMATION

Our department is fully transformed, in line with the objectives of the Employment Equity Act. We are proud to have built a team that broadly represents the diverse population of South Africa. This diversity enhances our ability to provide nuanced and culturally informed legal services to a wide range of clients.

MENTORSHIP AND SKILLS TRANSFER

We are deeply invested in the development of our junior attorneys. All junior members of our department have completed their articles of clerkship at Fairbridges and have been thoroughly mentored in Employment Law. This commitment to mentorship ensures that we maintain a consistent level of expertise and excellence across our team.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Our department is dedicated to delivering world-class service to all our clients. We adhere to the rigorous service standards required by the International Association Terralex, of which Fairbridges is the sole member in South Africa. Whether we are drafting complex employment contracts, providing strategic legal advice, or representing clients in court, we strive for excellence in every aspect of our work.

COMPREHENSIVE EXPERTISE

Our attorneys are equipped to handle every facet of Employment Law, from routine matters to complex disputes. We are particularly skilled in drafting a full range of policies, legal documents, and court pleadings. In many cases, our thorough approach to drafting can obviate the need to engage external counsel, saving our clients time and resources.

FEE STRUCTURE

Director Rate: R4 000.00 per hour Experience: 30+ years Director Rate: R3 000.00 per hour Experience: 13 years	Senior Associate Rate: R2 200.00 per hour Associate Rate: R2 000.00 per hour	Candidate Attorney Rate: R1 200.00 per hour
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SERVICE OFFERING

EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN LITIGATION ACROSS ALL SOUTH AFRICAN COURTS, INCLUDING:

- Labour Court
- Labour Appeal Court
- Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA)
- Various Bargaining Councils

DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES

- Chairing disciplinary hearings
- Acting as initiators in internal disciplinary enquiries
- Advising clients on the entire disciplinary process to ensure legal compliance

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

- Drafting of employment contracts
- Drafting of collective agreements
- Drafting of general commercial contracts
- Tailored to meet specific client needs while adhering to legal requirements

STRATEGIC ADVISORY SERVICES

- Managing Strikes and Labour Unrest
- Retrenchment Processes and Operational Requirement Dismissals
- Employment Equity Plans and Social Benefit Plans
- Restraints of Trade
- Workplace Policies

COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT LAW SERVICES

- Advising on unfair labour practices
- Handling dismissal disputes
- Addressing sexual harassment and workplace harassment issues
- Specialised advice on data protection and privacy matters
- Ensuring compliance with the latest regulations
- Service Offering

SERVICE OFFERING

LABOUR TRAINING SERVICES

- Comprehensive Training Services – Assisting Heads of Human Capital, Senior Managers and Managers of Human Capital and Human Resources Department with training in conducting internal disciplinary hearings and training them with the “know hows” of chairing at disciplinary hearings as well as initiating at disciplinary hearings and training them on the complete process of disciplinary hearings.
- Training the aforementioned HR personnel with defending matters brought against employees at the CCMA in conciliation, con-arb and arbitration.
- Provide practical guidelines when preparing and bringing matters before the CCMA.
- Training HR personnel to deal with sexual harassment and workplace harassment issues.

POPIA TRAINING SERVICES

- Specialised training on Data protection and privacy matters (aimed at blue collar and white collar workers, Exco Board on understanding the purpose of the Protection of Personal Information Act, Act 4 of 2013 and providing training on how to implement same in the workplace.
- Assist to develop electronic and/or hard copy of POPIA Manual for internal training purposes of a Company.
- Provide Internal POPIA training workshops (face to face at work premises and/or via zoom).
- Develop POPIA Governance and Policies (inclusive of drafting of Privacy Policy, Security Breach policy and procedure, Data minimising retention and deletion policy and Human Resources Data protection policy) for Companies.
- Assist with registering Information officers and deputy information officers with the information regulator.
- Assist with referral of an individual and/or Company (data breach) compliant to the information regulator.
- Assist with POPIA litigation (inclusive of defending a complaint referred by a data subject (of and concerning an individual and/or Company's) data breach to the information regulator).
- Conduct onsite Privacy Impact Assessments and Compile Recommendations Report and Develop POPIA Implementation Plan.
- Develop, Annual Revise and Update all Applicable Documents/Forms to become POPIA compliant.
- Third Party Impact Assessment Templates.

FICA TRAINING SERVICES

- FICA Training: We are skilled in conducting training in FICA and provide extensive training to managers and employees in this related legal field.
- Expert-Led Sessions: Insights from our legal professionals who understand the nuances of FICA.
- Practical Curriculum: Focus on the specifics that matter for RE1 and RES success – no time wasted on fluff.
- Flexible Delivery: On-site or virtual, tailored to the demands of busy insurance teams.
- Real-World Relevance: Use case studies that translate seamlessly into day-to-day compliance strategies.
- Risk Reduction: Proactive training now means fewer headaches – and expenses – later.



DAVID SHORT

DIRECTOR

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QUALIFICATIONS

B Proc (University of Pretoria, 1989)

MEMBERSHIPS

- The Legal Practice Council
- South African Society for Labour Law (SASLAW)

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

- Labour and Employment Law
- Litigation and Dispute Resolution
- Employment Policies and Contracts
- Strategic Labour Advisory Services

David has been practicing in Employment Law since 1992, accumulating over 32 years of experience. He joined Fairbridges in 2006 and currently manages the Employment and Employee Benefits Department, which operates out of both the Cape Town and Johannesburg offices. David is highly regarded for his expertise in Collective Labour Law and is an experienced strike handler and negotiator. He regularly provides legal opinions on a range of Labour Law topics, including dismissals, discrimination, and the transfer of businesses as going concerns. David has extensive experience in managing complex employment disputes, including those involving collective labour issues and high-profile disciplinary enquiries.

David frequently represents clients in employment-related litigation before various tribunals and courts. His notable cases include appearing before the Constitutional Court of South Africa in NUMSA obo Moses Fohlisa and 4 others v Hendor Mining Supplies t/a Marshalk Beleggings (Edms) Bpk. In addition to his litigation work, David has acted as a Judge of the Labour Court in 2015, 2016, and 2024, where he gained substantial experience in writing Labour Court judgments and findings in internal disciplinary enquiries.



JODI POSWELLETSKI

DIRECTOR

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QUALIFICATIONS

- BA (Law & Industrial Psychology), Wits
- LLB, Wits
- LLM (Corporate Law), Wits
- UCT Data Protection Course
- Accredited Mediator (LEAD).

MEMBERSHIPS

- The Legal Practice Council
- Associate of the Insurance Institute of South Africa (IISA)

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

- External initiator/chair in complex state-entity enquiries; ongoing CCMA/arbitration work for corporate clients.
- Recognised trainer and speaker; has addressed international and national forums on data protection.

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

- POPIA and employment-privacy compliance (policies, processes, impact assessments)
- Unlawful competition & restraints of trade (strategy, urgent relief support)
- Disciplinary enquiries (initiator and chair) and workplace investigations
- Training manuals and toolkits for HR/ER teams (digital & print)
- CCMA representation; advisory on dismissals, unfair labour practices and workplace harassment.

Jodi is an employment law and data privacy specialist with thirteen years of experience. Her work blends hands-on dispute resolution with practical compliance design. She advises on POPIA implementation across HR environments, chairs and initiates disciplinary enquiries, and develops modular training manuals (virtual and hard copy) that HR and line managers can deploy immediately. Jodi also acts in restraints of trade and unlawful competition matters, appears before the CCMA, and is regularly engaged to deliver executive-level training.



ALI SONDAY

SENIOR ASSOCIATE

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QUALIFICATIONS

- BCom Law (UWC, 2016)
- LLB (cum laude) (UWC, 2018)

MEMBERSHIPS

- The Legal Practice Council
- South African Society for Labour Law (SASLAW)

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

- Employment and Labour Law
- Commercial Law and Litigation
- Disciplinary Enquiries and Internal
- Investigations
- Data Protection and Privacy

Ali's expertise includes a strong focus on both employment-related legal matters and general commercial litigation. Ali represents a diverse range of clients, including individuals, local and international corporate entities, education institutions, and local municipalities. His experience spans various industries such as pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, finance, media, and education.

He provides comprehensive legal opinions on various employment law issues, ranging from unfair dismissal disputes to the development of employment policies and procedures. Ali appears regularly before the Labour Court, Labour Appeal Court, and CCMA, representing clients in a wide range of employment-related disputes. His litigation expertise extends to reviewing applications and managing complex commercial disputes in the High Court and Magistrate's Court. His ability to navigate the intricacies of employment law and his proficiency in general commercial litigation make him a valuable asset to the Employment and Employee Benefits Practice Group at Fairbridges.



PAULA PHUKUJE

ASSOCIATE

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QUALIFICATIONS

- BCom (Law & Human Resource Management), Wits
- LLB, Wits

MEMBERSHIPS

- The Legal Practice Council

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

- Highest-billing LabourNet consultant (Q3 & Q4 2024; Q1 2025);
- Best Labour Law Support Consultant (2023–2024).
- Delivered tailored employment-law solutions to prominent UK-based corporates in multi-jurisdiction projects

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

- HR/IR audits and compliance programmes (SA & UK alignment)
- Section 197 transfers, restructuring, retrenchments and union engagement
- Disciplinary processes (charge sheets, chairing packs, evidence reviews)
- Employment contracts, handbooks, and policy suites
- Advisory on strikes, pension law issues and workplace investigations

Paula is an admitted attorney focused on employment law, dispute resolution and industrial relations, with additional experience across commercial, insolvency and litigation mandates. She brings strong cross-border know-how, regularly harmonising South African HR frameworks with UK employment requirements, and is known for incisive audits, clear documentation, and on-call support to HR and ER teams during restructurings, strikes and Section 197 transfers.



ZETHEMBE MANUKUZA

CANDIDATE ATTORNEY

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QUALIFICATIONS

- LLB (Wits)
- LLM (Corporate Law) in progress (Wits)
- Dean's List (2021–2023)
- Certificates of Merit in Labour Law, Public
- International Law and Criminal Procedure
- Justice Dikgang Moseneke Prize (2022)

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

- CCMA referrals; drafting pleadings, heads and opinions in labour disputes
- Employment-contract and workplace policy drafting; legal research
- Assistance on medico-legal, healthcare regulatory and insurance matters.

Zethembe is a Candidate Attorney in the Employment & Labour team. He supports CCMA referrals and Labour Court matters, drafts pleadings and legal opinions, and assists with workplace policies, employment and commercial contracts. His developing practice spans labour disputes as well as medico-legal, healthcare-regulatory and insurance-litigation support. Academic distinctions (including multiple Dean's List awards and the Justice Dikgang Moseneke Prize) reflect his research rigour and drafting precision.

THE FAIRBRIDGES DIFFERENCE: *VALUE-ADDED SERVICES*

DIRECT ACCESS TO TEAM LEADERS

We understand that responsiveness is key for purposes of maintaining and developing an attorney-client relationship that is based on trust, reliability and mitigating clients' risks. Our lawyers are results-oriented and will therefore avail themselves to provide you with answers to your most pressing questions as and when required, on a one-on-one basis, either telephonically or via email.

SEMINARS, WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

We believe that education is key, and we have a genuine interest in, and an in-depth understanding of, the market and of our clients' operational requirements and needs. We offer bespoke courses to our clients on a regular basis in the form of training menus for purposes of upskilling our clients, their employees and their clients by keeping them abreast of the latest developments in the law.

We host regular seminars, webinars and workshops for our clients on topics that are relevant, and of particular interest to, our clients. We will tailor our presentations according to your requirements and with the audience that we are presenting to in mind.

GLOBAL ADVANTAGE

Fairbridges is a proud member of TerraLex, an alliance of top-tier law firms worldwide. This affiliation allows us to assist clients with cross-border matters or those requiring expertise from other jurisdictions. Through the TerraLex network, we can provide seamless legal support and collaboration with trusted legal experts globally.

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