

HOW TO BEAT YOUR VIRGINIA

NON-COMPETE

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— *And* —

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	5
About the Author	7
Introduction	9
Chapter 1 What Do You Do When Asked to Sign a Non-Compete Agreement?	12
Chapter 2 What if You Have Already Signed a Non-Compete Agreement and Now Want to Leave?	16
Chapter 3 What if Your Former Employer Is Threatening Legal Action?	24
Chapter 4 Is Your Employment Agreement a Valid Contract?	27
Chapter 5 Is Your Employment Agreement Reasonable and Therefore Enforceable?	34
Chapter 6 What if Your Employment Agreement Is Enforceable?	38

Chapter 7	42
Other Obligations Under Virginia Law	
Chapter 8	49
Physicians and Non-Competition Agreements	
Chapter 9	
Financial Advisors and Non-Competition Agreements	56
Chapter 10	
Non-competition Agreements in Technology Sector	60
Chapter 11	
Conclusion	62
Appendix I	64
Summary of Terms	
Appendix II	66
Myths and Rumors About Non-Competes in Virginia	
Appendix III	69
The Most Important Non-Compete Cases in Virginia	
Appendix IV	83
The Ten Biggest Mistakes Made by Employees	
Appendix V	85
Sample Lawsuit Against Employee	
References to Endnotes	104

PREFACE

Walt Disney once said, “The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.” Sound advice, but what if Mr. Disney had signed a non-compete agreement with his first employer, Laugh-O-Grams? Would he still have moved to Hollywood and started his own studio? Or would this great American inventor have stayed in Missouri and accepted a job selling shoes for Sears? Thankfully, Mr. Disney’s imagination was not stifled by an employment agreement or subject to the terms of a non-compete provision.

Chances are good the current executives at the Walt Disney Company, along with millions of other working Americans, have signed an agreement that contains language limiting their future employment. These agreements are typically referred to as “non-compete” agreements. They exist in all areas of commerce and are not limited to certain industries or high paid positions. Despite our collective admiration of the American dream, it has become common practice for Americans to surrender autonomy by signing restrictive employment agreements.

The bad news is many Americans cannot follow Disney’s advice and “quit talking and begin doing” when they are contractually bound not to practice their profession or utilize their job skills for two years within one hundred miles of their home. Or can they?

Let us confess our bias: We hate non-compete agreements. They are bad for employees, bad for our economy, and

