
DOCKET

INFORMED. INDISPENSABLE. IN-HOUSE.

Day In The Life: Elizabeth Sonnichsen

Community

Interviews and Profiles



Banner artwork by Net Vector / *Shutterstock.com*

5:45 am

I wake up with our 11-month-old and do a quick nursing session. We have been sleep training since she was six months old, but this last early morning wake up is the final “bad habit” that we are trying to break. I will be glad when I can use this early morning time to get back into my Peloton routine that has fallen off since going back to work after maternity leave.

While nursing, I check my emails and look through my calendar. I respond to or flag emails that arrived after my “do not disturb” started at 8 pm the night before.

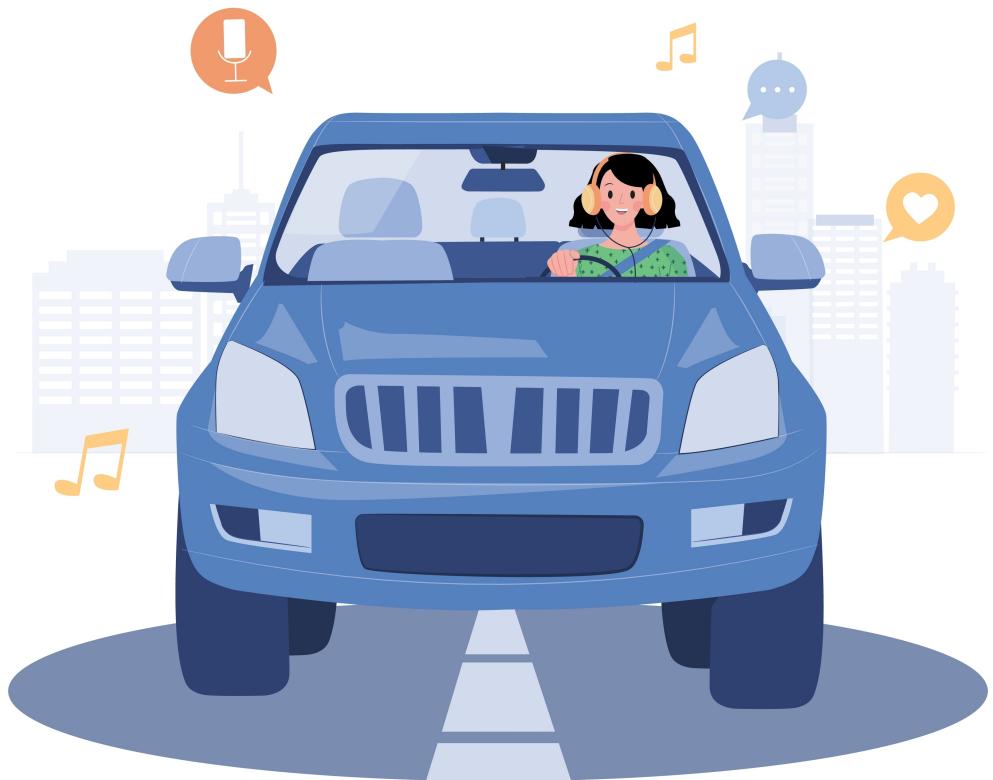
7:00-8:00 am

My husband and I do the “morning rush” of getting the baby and our four-year-old ready for childcare. Our oldest attends a local Montessori preschool, and we provide lunch and snacks daily. Part of the morning routine includes breakfast for everyone, packing lunch and snacks for both girls, and getting myself ready.

Every day I think that it would be better if I woke up earlier and didn’t have to do everything in one hour. But then I remember that having two small kids and working a full-time job is exhausting! I’m making it work the best that I can.

8:15 am

I’m out the door to our office in Eagle. I live in the town next to our offices, so it takes about 25 minutes. I take calls on the drive in if I can. If not, I will listen to one of my podcasts. Some favorites are Smartless (if I want to catch up on some pop culture), Have Kids They Said (if I want a laugh), and Strict Scrutiny (if I’m feeling lawyerly).



hoangpts / Shutterstock.com

9:00 am

I have a prep meeting for our Annual Leaders Meeting. I am tasked with helping with the welcome booth for our field leaders. During this meeting we put the finishing touches on who will be in charge of manning the booth for three days and making sure it is welcoming to folks as they come into the meeting hall.

9:30 am

I close my door and put my “do not disturb” sign on my door for my first pumping session of the day. I’m in the last few weeks of pumping since our baby is turning one in March. I will be grateful for when this part of the day isn’t a consideration anymore. I’m also grateful for the fact that I work in an accommodating business with my own office with a mini-fridge, so that I can continue to work while I pump and don’t have to use the community fridge.

10:00 am

Our monthly compliance committee meeting is next. We are reviewing and presenting each department’s goals for mitigating risks for 2024. I am responsible for the legal department’s report on both our plan for Q1 and our secondary risk goals.



Overearth / Shutterstock.com

11:00 am

I research a Nevada issue for a facility we support. We are arguing that two incidents were causally connected for a single occurrence, and I gather the necessary precedent from WestLaw. I provide the analysis to our general counsel and brokers for further dissemination to the insurance team.

11:30 am

Our annual audit is ongoing and the auditors ask for an impromptu meeting. I provide additional documentation to tie out our general and professional liability loss runs and case valuations. Each quarter, I work closely with our finance team and controller to evaluate current risks and provide guidance on overall valuations.

When I made the jump to in-house, I don’t think I totally understood that part of the “litigation and

“risk” role would include regular meetings with our finance team. I’m grateful for the education from those teams over the last few years and I am now confident when interacting with the audit team. (Even though most lawyers would say we avoid math like the plague.)

12:00 pm

A nurse who works for one of our customers is being deposed regarding her care in a liability matter in Wisconsin. I remotely attend the deposition with her and object on her behalf throughout the deposition. I’m surprised by and grateful for the fact that the deposition is only half-an-hour because the attorneys thought it would take two hours.

1:30 pm

Second pumping session of the day. I didn’t have time for lunch today so I grab two spoonfuls of peanut butter from the stash in my desk drawer.

2:00 pm

I have a call with opposing counsel on an employment matter that we received a demand on last week. I review the records prior to the call and finalize our production of the documents responsive to the records request. Since I’m licensed in California, I handle a lot of California matters in-house. When I moved to in-house, I was afraid that my “litigation muscle” would atrophy but I use it every single day.

3:00 pm

I finalize opposition papers for a Motion for Leave to Amend a Complaint in a California matter. While we typically get outside counsel on general liability matters, I’ve retained this matter in-house so that we can minimize costs. I send our opposition to our paralegal for filing with the court.

4:00 pm

I pack up my computer, pumping equipment, and drive home. I do my last pump of the day in my car while on a call with our HR team on an issue that has come up at one of the facilities we provide support to in Colorado.



Irina Strelnikova / Shutterstock.com

4:30 pm

I relieve our nanny for the day and clean my pump while waiting for my husband and our four-year-old to get home. We have an amazing arrangement with another family where we share the best nanny in the world. She is the reason that I am able to commit to my job and I'm grateful for the fact that we have reliable and competent childcare.

5:00 pm

I discuss a deposition that is set to occur next week in California with opposing counsel. While on the call, I try to multitask by deleting emails and flagging any emails that need follow up. I review my calendar to make sure I have done everything I need to ensure that my to-do list is up to speed.

5:30 pm

I get dinner ready for the family so that we can sit down at the table together for the first time at 6 pm. On the days that I work from the office, I try to make what I can out of our pre-made meals that I make on Sundays and freeze.

6:00-7:00 pm

Just like the morning rush, our night-time rush is packed full of to-dos. We have dinner, clean up, bath, and story time all in the hour so that we can get the girls down for bed by 7:15 pm.



Elizabeth Sonnichsen pictured with her husband and two beautiful daughters.

[Join ACC](#)

Disclaimer: The information in any resource in this website should not be construed as legal advice or as a legal opinion on specific facts, and should not be considered representing the views of its authors, its sponsors, and/or ACC. These resources are not intended as a definitive statement on the subject addressed. Rather, they are intended to serve as a tool providing practical guidance and references for the busy in-house practitioner and other readers.

[Elizabeth Sonnichsen](#)



Associate General Counsel

Pennant Services, Inc

Liz Sonnichsen is associate general counsel at Pennant Services, Inc., which supports independent operating subsidiaries providing healthcare through 111 home health and hospice agencies and 51 senior living communities across the country. She earned a bachelors from The College of Idaho and juris doctor from the University of Idaho College of Law. Sonnichsen is the chair of the Idaho State Bar Health Law Association, and is a Peloton and Netflix aficionado. She and her husband live in Boise, Idaho, where they are raising their two young girls to be proud sixth generation Idahoans.