Michael Santo began practicing law in his home state of Michigan in 1992 after receiving his undergraduate degree from Michigan State University and his law degree from the University of Detroit. After graduating from law school, he fulfilled a life-long dream of moving to Colorado when he accepted a position with Dufford, Waldeck, Milburn & Krohn and later cofounded with Betty Bechtel the firm of Bechtel & Santo, which became Bechtel Santo & Severn in 2018. Since 1994, Michael has focused his practice on defending companies in employment litigation, including race, sex, age, national origin, religious, and disability discrimination lawsuits; wrongful discharge; and wage and hour matters. In addition, he regularly represents employers in prosecuting and defending claims of trade secret misappropriation, unfair competition, and employee raiding.

Counseling companies on day-to-day employment issues is also an important part of Michael's practice. This includes advising employers on hiring, discipline, and termination decisions; on leave and disability issues; and on preparing and revising employee handbooks. By helping employers develop sound personnel policies, Michael assists many Colorado companies, large and small, in minimizing the risk of employment-related litigation.

In 2014, Michael was lead counsel in the Colorado Supreme Court case, ICAO v. Softrock. This case assisted employers by requiring the Department of Labor to more thoroughly analyze the independent-contractor factors during a Colorado Department of Labor audit.

Michael is a frequent lecturer on employment law issues, and contributing author for: The Practitioner's Guide to Colorado Employment Law, Continuing Legal Education (CLE) in Colorado Inc. (1999 and supplements); The Practitioner's Guide to Colorado Business Organizations, CLE in Colorado, Inc., (2004); and The Employer's Advisory, a Bechtel & Santo quarterly newsletter, published since 1994.

In 2014, the board of trustees of the Colorado Bar Foundation invited Michael to become a fellow of the foundation, an honor restricted to no more than five percent of lawyers in Colorado.