

Jeffrey D. Colman

Of Counsel

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Areas of Focus

Class Action

Law Firm and Professional
Services Defense



Overview

Jeff Colman is a litigator and a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Mr. Colman has focused his 50-year career on complex civil and criminal litigation at both the trial and appellate levels. Mr. Colman has represented more than 60 law firms across the country (as well as individual attorneys) in professional liability matters. He also has represented plaintiffs and defendants in class action litigation, in the defense of environmental, securities, antitrust and civil rights litigation, and in a wide array of civil and criminal matters. Mr. Colman has been extremely active in important pro bono representations and in law reform work.

In professional liability matters, Mr. Colman has represented international, national, regional and local law firms in claims including malpractice, breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract, fraud, conspiracy, contempt and a host of other matters. The subject matters of these representations have included bank failures, corporate receiverships, tax, real estate, environmental, securities, patent, litigation, trusts and estates, Indian gaming, acquisitions and other corporate transactions. Mr. Colman has successfully represented law firms and individual lawyers in disciplinary actions and other sensitive matters. His representations have been before administrative agencies, in the trial courts, and in appellate courts across the country.

Mr. Colman has received numerous awards for his extensive pro bono and public service activities. Among others, in 2012, Mr. Colman received the Justice John Paul Stevens Award, presented by The Chicago Bar Association and Chicago Bar Foundation to lawyers who exemplify Justice Stevens' commitment to integrity and public service; in 2011, he was named a "legend" of the bar by the American Constitution Society; in 2009, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association presented him with an

Award for Excellence in Pro Bono Service; and in 2008, the John Howard Association of Illinois, a prison reform group, recognized his work defending Guantánamo Bay prisoners with its Leadership Award. Mr. Colman has served as a member (and chair) of the Illinois Supreme Court's Commission on Access to Justice, as a member of the Court's Committee on Pattern Jury Instructions in Criminal Cases, and as chairman of the Court's Committee on Post-Conviction Review of Death Sentences. He also has served as a member of a host of not-for-profit organizations devoted to providing legal assistance to the poor and disenfranchised in our community.

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Representative Matters

- Mr. Colman has served as lead counsel for a major utility in a number of class action cases alleging environmental contamination. He also represented a major food manufacturer in nationwide class action litigation involving allegedly contaminated meat products, and he has represented Illinois state officials in class action employment litigation and the trustees of a major pension fund in class action litigation brought by beneficiaries of the fund. On the plaintiffs' side, Mr. Colman has represented a class of flight attendants in litigation challenging a major airline's "no-marriage" rule and a class of African American home purchasers in class action housing discrimination litigation.
- Mr. Colman served for more than 20 years as a Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of Illinois, representing state officials in a variety of cases, including First Amendment, voting rights, employment discrimination and reverse race discrimination. Mr. Colman also has represented municipal governmental entities and he has served as counsel for Cook County, the City of Chicago, the Chicago Board of Education, and the Chicago Board of Elections.
- In the white collar criminal area, Mr. Colman has represented large and small corporations, governmental entities, partnerships and individuals in grand jury investigations, internal corporate investigations and criminal proceedings at both the trial and appellate court levels. In recent years, Mr. Colman has conducted several internal investigations for large corporations, and has represented a corporate executive charged with interstate transportation of stolen trade secrets, the chief executive officer of a corporation which allegedly violated the Anti Embargo Act, several attorneys who allegedly had improper relationships with judges, an options trader and investment advisor who allegedly engaged in securities fraud and a Fortune 100 company involved in a criminal antitrust investigation.
- Mr. Colman has participated in more than 70 civil and criminal appeals involving a wide variety of issues in courts across the country, including the United States Supreme Court, and the United States Courts of Appeals for the Second, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Eleventh and Federal Circuits. His recent work includes successful appeals for major law firms involved in malpractice and securities fraud litigation, the successful representation of public officials in civil rights appeals and the successful representation of the Governor of the State of Illinois in litigation challenging a state voting procedure.

- Like many of the firm's attorneys, Mr. Colman has been deeply involved in the representation of the indigent, in community affairs and in efforts to improve the quality of the administration of justice. Mr. Colman has spent considerable time over the last five years representing a public radio station in First Amendment and FOIA litigation. He spent more than four years on a team of Jenner & Block lawyers representing prisoners at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base. Additionally, Mr. Colman has litigated death penalty cases in Georgia and Illinois, he has represented minorities in voting rights litigation and housing discrimination cases, and he has represented a significant number of indigent defendants in criminal trials and pro bono appeals. Mr. Colman served as President of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Bar Foundation and President of the Board of Directors of the Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago. In the past, Mr. Colman has served as a member of the board of directors of numerous organizations, including the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the John Howard Association, and the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities.

Credentials

Admissions

- Illinois, 1975
- California (Inactive), 1973
- Wisconsin (Inactive), 2020

Education

- Stanford Law School, JD, 1973
- University of Wisconsin, BA, 1970

Court Admissions

- US Supreme Court, 1978
- US Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, 1980
- US Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, 1976
- US Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, 1981
- US Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit, 1995
- US Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit, 1982
- US Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit, 1993
- US District Court, District of Arizona, 1992
- US District Court, Northern District of California, 1973
- US District Court, Central District of Illinois, 1992
- US District Court, Northern District of Illinois, 1975
- US District Court, Northern District of Illinois (Trial Bar), 1982

- US District Court, Southern District of Illinois, 2001
- Illinois Supreme Court, 1975
- Maryland Court of Appeals, 1973
- US Tax Court, 1989