

April A. Otterberg

Partner

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Areas of Focus

Law Firm and Professional Services Defense

Trade Secrets and Restrictive Covenants

Business Litigation

Intellectual Property

ERISA



Overview

April Otterberg represents leading law firms and professional services firms in their most challenging professional liability disputes. A Co-Chair of the firm’s nationally recognized Law Firm and Professional Services Defense Practice, April is ranked for Nationwide Law Firm Defense by *Chambers USA*, with clients commenting, “she is extraordinary. If I had a big problem, she’s the person we’d hire. She has absolute devotion to the client’s cause,” and “she’s a phenomenal attorney. April is as smart as they come and a deeply strategic thinker too.”

April knows how to dig in and investigate professional liability claims and then to use that depth and breadth of knowledge to shape effective and practical defense and resolution strategies, from pre-complaint through to litigation. Recently, her law firm defense practice has included defending lawyers and law firms against claims of intentional torts and aiding and abetting fraud, such as claims arising from Ponzi and other fraudulent schemes.

April also is a trial lawyer who represents clients in a range of business litigation matters, particularly those involving allegations of breaches of fiduciary duty and other insider misconduct. She is a member of the firm’s *Chambers USA*-ranked Trade Secrets and Restrictive Covenants Practice, as well as a longtime co-author of Jenner & Block’s publication *Understanding and Litigating Trade Secrets: An Outline for Analyzing the Statutory and Common Law of Trade Secrets in Illinois*. April regularly counsels and litigates on behalf of clients in restrictive covenant matters and in matters involving the protection or theft of their sensitive business information.

April maintains an active pro bono practice that focuses on reproductive rights and criminal defense matters for indigent clients. For example, she has represented a client on federal death row for virtually her entire career, first

in his appeal and now in his ongoing post-conviction proceedings. She is a past Chair of the Illinois State Bar Association's Standing Committee on Professional Conduct and a past member of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Lawyers' Professional Liability, and she regularly speaks and writes on professional liability and trade secrets topics. She is also a longtime participant in the Firm's associate mentoring program and its Women's Forum affinity group.



As a litigator, my singular focus is on achieving the best possible results for my clients. My approach is to undertake a complete mastery of the facts and to shape a defense strategy that is always a few steps ahead of our opponent.”

Areas of Focus

- Law Firm and Professional Services Defense
- Trade Secrets and Restrictive Covenants
- Business Litigation
- Intellectual Property
- ERISA
- Reproductive Health Task Force

Representative Matters

- Obtained dismissal with prejudice, and then settled on appeal, malpractice claims asserted against an international law firm concerning its handling of a litigation matter and seeking in excess of \$20 million.
- Obtained dismissal with prejudice of malpractice and related claims asserted against an international law firm and several of its lawyers concerning the firm's handling of certain transactional matters.
- Member of the team that successfully settled through pre-litigation counseling, mediation, and negotiations a matter against an international law firm in which the plaintiff sought in excess of \$500 million arising out of alleged improper tax advice.
- Provided litigation counseling on matters of U.S. legal malpractice law in relation to claims asserted abroad against an international law firm.
- Represented an in-house patent attorney before the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission and the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit for alleged “inequitable conduct” before the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Credentials

Admissions

- Illinois, 2006

Education

- Boston College Law School, JD, *summa cum laude*; Order of the Coif; salutatorian, 2006
- Loyola University Chicago, BA, *summa cum laude*; Phi Beta Kappa, 2003

Court Admissions

- US Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, 2012
- US Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit, 2010
- US District Court, Northern District of Illinois, 2006
- US District Court, Western District of Michigan, 2007
- US District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin, 2014
- US Court of Federal Claims, 2008

Service / Recognition

Awards

- *Crain's Chicago Business*, Notable Litigators & Trial Attorneys, 2025
- *Chambers USA*, Law Firm Defense (Nationwide), 2024-2025
- - ISBA Board of Governors Award, December 2023
- *Illinois Super Lawyers*, Rising Star, Professional Liability: Defense, 2012-2021
- Law Bulletin Publishing Company - Leading Lawyers Network: Emerging Lawyer, Criminal Defense Law: Felonies & Misdemeanors; Criminal Defense Law: White Collar; Professional Malpractice Defense Law: Including Legal/Technical/Financial, 2015, 2019

Community

- DuPage Children's Museum, Board Member, 2023-present

Service to the Bar

- Illinois Judicial Ethics Committee, 2024-present
- American Bar Association, Member, Standing Committee on Lawyers' Professional Liability, 2017-2020
- Illinois State Bar Association, Standing Committee on Professional Conduct, 2012-present; Secretary, 2019-2020; Vice Chair, 2020-2021; Chair, 2021-2022
- Chicago Bar Association, Chair, Committee on Attorney Malpractice, 2015-2016; Vice Chair, Committee on Attorney Malpractice, 2014-2015