

Law Firm and Professional Services Defense

For law firms and professional services organizations, the risks posed by professional liability, malpractice, or ethics claims can be high. Civil litigation, criminal indictments, government investigations, state disciplinary proceedings, and sanctions litigation can inflict significant financial and reputational damage to the firm and the individual professionals. Without an experienced defense team that knows how to mount and pursue effective defense strategies, these high-stakes matters can be even more challenging.

For nearly 40 years, Jenner & Block has represented law firms and lawyers across the country seeking counseling or an aggressive defense in some of their most serious and sensitive matters. We have represented more than 75 law firms across the country and nearly 25 percent of AmLaw 100 firms. Drawing on decades of experience in the ethics and malpractice arena, and the experience of our real estate, tax, patent, corporate, securities, environmental, and many other practices, we work strategically and discreetly to achieve the best resolution possible for our clients through early case and risk assessment, pre-litigation strategies, settlement negotiations, and litigation, including through trial or arbitration, and on appeal.

Proud to Represent Our Profession

Professionals and their firms can face reputational, financial, and legal risk from many angles. Leading law firms and professional services organizations trust Jenner & Block to help them navigate their most complex and sensitive challenges. These matters include:

- Malpractice and breach of fiduciary duty claims
- Fraud and aiding and abetting claims
- Criminal litigation and government investigations
- Disciplinary proceedings and contempt and sanctions proceedings
- Firm split-ups and partnership disputes
- Billing and fee disputes
- Labor disputes and employment discrimination and harassment claims
- Conflicts of interest and breaches of confidentiality

- Disqualification motions

Legal Malpractice, Breaches of Fiduciary Duty, and Aiding and Abetting

Law firms of all sizes hire us to represent them in their most challenging civil matters, from cases alleging malpractice, to accusations of assistance to Ponzi schemes, to assertions of intentionally tortious conduct. We have resolved numerous such matters favorably for our clients, both in and out of court.

The cases we handle arise from a variety of substantive practice areas—including real estate transactions, tax advice, corporate and securities work, trusts and estates, patent prosecution and commercial litigation. Where appropriate, we call upon our colleagues to provide in-house, practical expertise in these practice areas.

Criminal Matters and Investigations

We also defend lawyers and law firms in criminal matters and governmental investigations with the support of our Investigations, Compliance, and Defense Practice. Whether we're consulting, providing counseling, performing internal investigations or responding to subpoenas for documents and trial testimony, we understand the unique challenges of defending professionals in criminal settings, and we are experienced in navigating the complexities posed by professional obligations, including the attorney-client privilege and the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Disciplinary Matters, Disqualification Motions, Sanctions Proceedings, and Ethics Counseling

When a lawyer or a law firm faces the prospect of disciplinary matters, disqualification motions, a finding of civil or criminal contempt, or sanctions proceedings, we draw on years of ethics and professional responsibility experience to develop effective strategies to pursue the client's interests. We are also well-equipped and frequently retained to counsel law firms and corporate legal departments on emerging ethical issues, including cyber-security, litigation finance, unauthorized practice of law and the ownership of law firms by non-lawyers.

Our team includes a National Delegate of the American College of Ethics Committee and two Specialists in Legal Malpractice Law certified by the State Bar of California. Our lawyers also serve or have served as Chairs of the Illinois Supreme Court's Committee on Character and Fitness, the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Professional Responsibility and Ethics Committee, the Illinois State Bar Association's Standing Committee on Professional Conduct, US Soccer's Independent Ethics Committee and the Chicago Bar Association's Committee on Attorney Malpractice; members of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Lawyers' Professional Liability; and a member of Law360's 2022 Legal Ethics Editorial Advisory Board. Our members have also served as experts on legal ethics and professional responsibility issues.

Leading Trial Lawyers

We are experienced advocates who can try any case, anywhere, at any time. We litigate professional liability matters in state court, federal court, and arbitral forums, including matters tried to jury verdicts. Our team includes fellows of the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) and International Academy of Trial Lawyers (IATL).

Key Contacts



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Related Capabilities

Appellate and Supreme Court

Bankruptcy and Restructuring

Business Litigation

Culture Risk and Sensitive Investigations

Data Privacy and Cybersecurity

ERISA

ESG: Environmental, Social, and Governance

Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation

Labor and Employment

Law Firms and Professional Services

Litigation

Monitorship Practice

Real Estate Transactions

Reproductive Health Task Force