

# Partner Adam Unikowsky Argues before the Supreme Court in *Williams v. Washington*

## News

October 7, 2024

On October 7, Jenner & Block Partner Adam Unikowsky represented Nancy Williams and petitioners in oral arguments before the US Supreme Court in *Williams et al., v. Washington*.

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The question before the court is whether exhaustion of state administrative remedies is required to bring claims under Section 1983 of Title 42 of the US Code, which was originally enacted with the Civil Rights Act of 1871. The law provides plaintiffs with a cause of action against all “who, under color of state law, deprives them of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws.”

The petitioners’ amended complaint brought claims under § 1983, alleging that respondent’s administration of Alabama’s unemployment compensation scheme violated their constitutional due-process rights and federal statutory rights. Several allege experiencing “interminable delays in obtaining benefits determinations and hearings,” while others say they were “arbitrarily denied benefits without explanation” which resulted in hardships.

The Supreme Court of Alabama dismissed petitioners’ § 1983 claims for failure to exhaust state administrative remedies.

In his brief to the Supreme Court, Adam argues that decision defies the Supreme Court’s clear precedent on administrative exhaustion requirements in the case *Patsy v. Board of Regents*.

In addition to Adam, the team representing Williams includes Associates Arjun Ramamurti and Emanuel Powell III.

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