



BASSFORD REMELE

Steven M. Sitek

SHAREHOLDER



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PRACTICE GROUPS

Commercial Litigation
General Liability
Trust and Estates Litigation

INDUSTRY GROUPS

Construction

OVERVIEW

Mr. Sitek focuses his practice in the areas of commercial litigation, trust and estates litigation, and general liability, bringing more than 20 years of litigation and trial experience to his clients.

As a Minnesota State Bar Association Board Certified Civil Trial Specialist with extensive state, federal, and other court experience, Mr. Sitek regularly represents businesses and individuals in a variety of commercial and estate disputes, including general business and litigation matters, construction and real estate matters, trust disputes, and will contests. He also represents businesses, including product manufacturers and suppliers, in product liability and personal injury cases.

Mr. Sitek served as the president of the 700-member Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association and was the board of directors liaison for its Construction Section. He was also on the Assembly of the Minnesota State Bar Association.

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

Hamline University School of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1999
University of St. Thomas, B.A., 1996

Bar Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota
- U.S. District Court, District of Nebraska
- U.S. District Court, District of South Dakota
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Wisconsin
- U.S. Court of Federal Claims
- Minnesota
- Washington
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

Certification

Minnesota State Bar Association Board Certified Civil Trial Specialist

EXPERIENCE

Representative Cases

- Won a \$2 million dollar verdict in a jury trial for a bank client in a breach of contract case.
- Won significant verdict in favor of clients who contested estate planning documents on the basis of undue influence and lack of testamentary capacity.
- Obtained successful decision in a court trial in favor of clients who contested several trust iterations on the basis of undue influence resulting in the shift of more than \$2 million in assets.
- Defended municipality in a two-week trial involving an alleged significant traumatic brain injury.
- Obtained appellate victory on behalf of clients seeking indemnification and advancement of attorney fees from limited liability corporation.

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- Successfully defended hotel architect in South Dakota accused of providing negligent design services.
- Obtained favorable settlement for clients in breach of contract case involving mining exploration.
- Obtained summary judgment in favor of client contesting a will and antenuptial agreement.
- Obtained favorable result in North Dakota for engineering firm accused of providing negligent design services related to a wastewater system.
- Obtained favorable result for clients in case involving substantial property damage resulting from construction work.
- Obtained summary judgment in favor of trustee in case involving allegations of breach of fiduciary duties.
- Obtained defense verdict in Wisconsin for tankless water heater manufacturer accused of defective design in product liability lawsuit.
- Obtained favorable verdict in a breach of contract case on behalf of client involved in sale of airplane hangar.
- Obtained victory at trial for an airplane engine manufacturer in dispute regarding defective engine component parts.
- Successfully defended an individual alleged to be responsible for indemnifying a business claimed to be responsible for carbon monoxide poisoning of several family members aboard a houseboat; *Yang v. Voyagaire Houseboats, Inc.*, 701 N.W.2d 783 (Minn. 2005).

Publications

- *Remodeling the Relationship: Modifying the Tripartite Relationship between Insurer, Insured, and the Insured's Attorney*, co-author, International Association of Defense Counsel, Construction Law and Litigation Committee Newsletter, January 2013
- *Claims for Contribution and Indemnity after Weston v. McWilliams: Where do the Claims Start and Where do the Claims Stop?*, co-author, Minnesota Defense, Fall 2006
- *Public Policy Considerations for Exculpatory and Indemnification Clauses*, co-author, 32 Wm. Mitchell L. Rev 1315 (2006)

Seminars

- *Putting on the Greatest Show on Earth (Without Looking Like a Clown)*, presenter, International Association of Defense Counsel Midyear Meeting, February 26, 2020
- *Trust & Estate Risks and Pitfalls for Attorneys*, presenter, Minnesota Lawyers Mutual, July 17, 2019
- *Legal Update: Payment of Fiduciary Attorneys' Fees*, presenter, Minnesota Lawyers Mutual, May 2, 2018
- *Claims Handling for Minnesota Cases*, presenter, private insurance company, September 26, 2017
- *Trust and Estate Litigation*, presenter, Minnesota Lawyers Mutual, July 18, 2017
- *Litigating Under Minnesota's Uniform Trust Code*, presenter, U.S. Bank, January 27, 2016
- *Settling Trust and Estate Disputes Without Litigation*, presenter, National Business Institute, January 21, 2016
- *Recent Cases*, presenter, Minnesota State Bar Association Probate and Trust Section Annual Meeting, December 4, 2015
- *Minnesota's New Uniform Trust Code*, presenter, Minnesota CLE, November 2015

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- *Mom Always Liked You Best – Trust and Estate Litigation and the New Minnesota UTC*, presenter, Bremer Wealth Management, November 9, 2015
- *Litigating Under Minnesota’s Uniform Trust Code*, presenter, Minnesota Continuing Legal Education, October 28, 2015
- *Updates, Reallocation, Experts, Duty to Defend and Collateral Sources*, presenter, private insurance company, November 11, 2014
- *Claims Handling for Minnesota Cases: Directors and Officers*, presenter, private insurance company, March 18, 2014
- *Claims Handling for Minnesota Cases: Tenders of Defense, Indemnification, and Additional Insured Status*, presenter, private insurance company, November 5, 2013
- *Claims Handling for Minnesota Cases: First-Party Bad Faith, Premises Liability, Product Liability and No-Fault Arbitration*, presenter, private insurance company, March 7, 2013
- *Home Warranty Statute Changes: What Contractors Need to Know*, presenter, Bassford Remele public seminar, July 27, 2011

PROFESSIONAL & CIVIC

Bar Associations

- Minnesota State Bar Association
 - Assembly, 2019-2020
 - Probate and Trust Law Section
 - Litigation Committee Section
 - Civil Litigation Section
- South Dakota State Bar Association
- State Bar Association of North Dakota
- State Bar of Wisconsin
- Washington State Bar Association
- Hennepin County Bar Association

Professional Associations

- International Association of Defense Counsel
 - Business Litigation Committee
 - Vice Chair of Communications, 2014-2019
 - Construction Law Committee
 - Product Liability Committee
- Defense Research Institute
 - Cannabis Law Committee
- Professional Liability Defense Federation
- Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association
 - Immediate Past President, 2019-2020
 - President, 2018-2019
 - Vice President, 2017-2018
 - Treasurer, 2016-2017
 - Secretary, 2015-2016
 - Board of Directors, 2010-2021
 - Construction Section; Board Liaison, 2017-2019; Chair, 2006-2009
 - Product Liability Section, Board Liaison, 2012-2017

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Civic Involvement

- Advocates for Human Rights, Volunteer Attorney, Asylum Project
- Tubman Safety Project, Volunteer Attorney
- St. Paul Lacrosse, Board of Directors
- St. Paul Capitals, Hockey Coach
- Highland Little League, Baseball Coach
- Prodeo Academy, former tutor

ACCOLADES

Honors & Awards

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Insurance Law and Litigation-Trusts and Estates, 2021-present
- North Star Lawyer, Minnesota State Bar Association, 2019 and 2020
- Minnesota Super Lawyers list, *Super Lawyers*, 2013-present
- Minnesota Rising Stars list, *Super Lawyers*, 2006-2012
- Up and Coming Attorney, *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2010