DOWNEYBRAND

Meghan M. Baker

Partner / Executive Committee Member

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Practice Areas

Appellate & Writ Practice | Class Action Defense | Complex Business Litigation | Employment Litigation | Environmental/Toxics Litigation | Financial Institutions | Intellectual Property Litigation | Products Liability | Real Property & Land Use Litigation | Trust & Estate Litigation

Individuals and companies looking to resolve complex legal disputes turn to Meghan Baker because of her client-focused approach and proven results.

With almost two decades of trial and litigation experience, Meghan's litigation practice focuses on business, commercial, employment, real estate, and probate disputes. She also handles class action defense, construction defect, and product liability claims. Her clients span a broad range of industries, including professional and financial service providers, developers and construction companies, as well as manufacturers and distributors.

Meghan graduated first in her class at University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law. She has been rated "AV Preeminent" by Martindale-Hubbell and is recognized by Best Lawyers in America© and Northern California Super Lawyers for her business litigation acumen.

Experience

Representative Complex Litigation and Class Action Experience

- Member of four-person team to defend major timber company in procedurally and substantively complex litigation that involved one federal action and six consolidated state actions, and claims seeking an aggregate of approximately $1 billion dollars in damages from the Moonlight Fire. The federal action settled, and a year later, the court dismissed the state actions with prejudice and awarded the defendants monetary sanctions and attorney fees totaling over $30 million dollars. Currently on appeal. Read media coverage on the Moonlight Fire Litigation here.
- Defended a large window manufacturer in defense of nationwide class action asserting violations of the Magnusson-Moss Act and unfair business practices claims. Obtained a completedismissal of the action prior to class certification through motion practice. Dismissal affirmed on appeal.
- Defended a computer parts distributor in defense of a nationwide consumer class action involving claims of unfair competition and fraud. Developed strategy for attacking the lawsuit at the pleadings stage, prior to discovery and significant legal costs. Obtained dismissal of class allegations against client.

- Defended a regional furniture retailer in defense of a consumer class action involving claims of false advertising and fraudulent business practices. Drafted comprehensive motion attacking the complaint. Obtained favorable settlement while motion was pending.
- Defended a large California credit union in defense of a class action challenging debit card overdraft practices. Obtained favorable settlement following meditation.
- Co-counsel in defense of nationwide manufacturer of consumer goods in a consumer class action involving claims of unfair competition and violation of the Consumer Legal Remedies Act. Drafted a successful motion to stay the proceedings. The action was dismissed with prejudice following the settlement of a related national class action.
- Defended a fireplace manufacturer in a complex personal injury action asserting strict products liability and negligence claims. Drafted numerous motions, propounded and responded to extensive discovery and managed complex document production issues. Action favorably settled following meditation; terms confidential.

Representative Business/Commercial Litigation Experience

- Represented plastics manufacture in lawsuit against material suppliers for breach of contract, breach of warranty, and fraud. Action settled on favorable terms that included both a monetary component and credit component towards future sales.
- Defended national industrial painting company in lawsuit alleging breach of contract and fraud. Negotiated a settlement that resulted in dismissal of the complaint and payment of $1.25 million to client.
- Defended large regional accounting firm in an arbitration action brought by former partners regarding the buy-out provisions in a partnership agreement and covenants not to compete. Second chair at arbitration hearing and lead attorney on legal briefing. The arbitrator rejected all claims against the accounting business, and upheld the validity of the covenants not to compete. Drafted and won a motion for the accounting firm to recover all of its fees and costs.
- Defended beverage distributor in lawsuit by shareholders/family members regarding disputed stock transaction. Drafted successful motion for summary judgment. Decision affirmed on appeal.
- Represented agricultural financing company in litigation against borrower for breach of contract, fraud and misrepresentation. Successfully opposed a motion to dismiss the complaint; negotiated favorable monetary settlement for client shortly after the court denied the motion to dismiss.
- Assisted with the representation of shareholders in litigation under the Uniform Securities Act; drafted successful motion for preliminary injunctive relief; action resulted in substantial monetary settlement for clients.

Representative Employment Experience

- Represented clients in litigation instituted by their former employer for breach of contract, unfair competition, tortuous interference with prospective economic advantage, and breach of fiduciary duty; drafted comprehensive motion for summary judgment for clients; shortly thereafter the case settled for less than 1% of the damages sought by the former employer.
- Represented corporate client in litigation involving non-compete covenants and unfair competition;

successfully opposed a motion to transfer the case out-of-state; action settled on favorable terms for client shortly thereafter.

- Represented former partner of accounting firm regarding expulsion from partnership. Action settled on favorable terms day before arbitration proceedings commenced.

Representative Real Estate Experience

- Represented tenant in lease dispute. Negotiated favorable monetary settlement for client.
- Defended mobile home park owner in an action by the purchaser for non-disclosure of mold and other alleged defects. After mediation, the case settled for less than 10% of the damages sought by purchaser.
- Represented landowners in action against neighbors involving boundary line dispute, easements and adverse possession. After mediation, clients received desired easement to adjoining property.
- Defended landowners in action by a prospective purchaser for breach of an option agreement and non-disclosure. The action settled for less than 15% of the damages sought by the prospective purchaser.
- Second chair trial counsel in partnership dispute involving real property ownership; action favorably settled on the first day of trial.

Representative Appellate Experience

- Drafted brief, argued and prevailed in an appeal in the California Court of Appeals, Third Appellate District concerning a contract interpretation issue.
- Drafted brief, argued and prevailed in an appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit concerning a consumer class action.
- Drafted successful appellate brief in the California Court of Appeals, Second Appellate District based on inadvertent mistake of former counsel.
- Drafted successful writ of mandate to the California Court of Appeals, Third Appellate District. Shortly thereafter the case against the client was dismissed.

Professional & Community Service

- American Leadership Forum, Mountain Valley Chapter, Class XXIV, 2020-2021
- Capital Region Family Business Center, Technical Advisor, 2022; Board of Directors, 2019-present; Programs Committee, 2017-2018
- Federal Bar Association, Sacramento Chapter, Board of Directors, 2007-present; President, 2013
- United States District Court, Eastern District of California Historical Society of California, Board of Directors, 2014-present
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Civil Litigation Section; Board of Directors, 2012
- California Lawyers Association, Litigation Section

- University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, Mock Trial Coach, 2005-2010
- Anthony M. Kennedy American Inn of Court, Student Member, 2004-2005
- *McGeorge Law Review,* Volume 36, Former Chief Comment Editor
- *McGeorge Law Review*, Volume 35, Former Comment and Legislative Staff Member

Education

- J.D., University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, 2005
- B.A., with honors, University of California at Davis, 2002

Honors & Rankings

- AV Preeminent® Rating by Martindale-Hubbell®
- Best Lawyers in America©, Commercial Litigation, 2023-2024
- *Sacramento Magazine*, 100 Notable Business Leaders, 2021
- *Sacramento Business Journal*, 40 Under 40, 2018
- *Super Lawyers*, Northern California Super Lawyers, Business Litigation, 2021-2023
- *Super Lawyers*, Northern California Rising Star, Business Litigation, 2014-2020
- *Sacramento Business Journal*, Best of the Bar, 2015-2019
- *Sacramento Magazine*, Top Lawyer, Appellate, Business Litigation, Class Action/Mass Torts, General Litigation, Commercial Litigation, 2015-2023
- Clerkship, District Judge Garland E. Burrell, United States District Court, Eastern District of California, 2005-2006
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- Order of the Barristers

Speaking Engagements / Events

- *When Family Friction Catches Fire: Practical Advice for Avoiding Interfamily Litigation*, Presenter, Capital Region Family Business Center's 2022 Annual Generations Conference, May 13, 2022
- *Bizwomen Mentoring Monday*, Mentor, Sacramento Business Journal, February 25, 2019