DOWNEYBRAND

Anthony L. Vignolo

Partner

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Practice Areas

Appellate & Writ Practice | Class Action Defense | Complex Business Litigation | Employment Litigation | Food & Agriculture | Food & Agriculture Litigation | Insurance | Products Liability | Real Property & Land Use Litigation | Regulatory Law & Business Permitting | Trust & Estate Litigation

With an insurance defense background, it is a natural fit for Anthony Vignolo to focus his legal practice in the areas of civil litigation and insurance law.

Anthony's passion for litigation – which focuses on business, anti-trust, products liability, food and agriculture, and real property disputes – began as early as law school when Anthony was selected among hundreds of candidates for a coveted spot on his law school's trial competition team and went undefeated in national trial competitions. That same level of success has followed Anthony throughout his legal career in all types of legal matters.

While it is often easy in any job to "go through the motions," Anthony's dedication to his clients and ability to "think outside the box" cause him to go above and beyond in identifying the critical legal or factual issue for a successful outcome. Whether persuading a jury, opposing counsel, or an insurance adjuster, Anthony uses these skills in connection with his superior advocacy, sound judgment, and ability to extemporize to obtain favorable results for his clients. He is among the select few trial lawyers who have obtained punitive damage awards in multiple trials.

Having previously represented insurance companies, Anthony regularly advises all types of clients on insurance coverage issues and battles insurance companies that wrongfully deny coverage for claims. He also oversees the handling of multi-million dollar cases by appointed insurance defense counsel for clients who may be concerned about exposure to a judgment exceeding policy limits. Most recently, Anthony successfully forced an insurance company to pay an entire $27M jury verdict – which was $16M over his client's insurance policy limits – after the insurance company and its appointed defense attorneys failed to follow Anthony's pre-trial recommendation to settle the case within policy limits.

Clients turn to Anthony for resolution of their legal disputes when they need a zealous attorney who is dedicated to success.

Experience

- Obtained $4.1M award on behalf of developer, owner, and seller of apartment complex, after nearly 30 days of testimony and argument in arbitration proceeding in which buyers attempted to offset entire amount due on seller's carry-back promissory note by alleging Fair Housing Act violations and other claims.

- Lead trial counsel for developer in 3-week jury trial against former partners, and obtained significant verdict and punitive damage award after proving fraud.
- Lead counsel in wrongful death products liability action for national alcoholic beverage manufacturer. Credited with developing a legal argument that resulted in dismissal of the case with prejudice, which allowed client to secure dismissals or very favorable settlements of other similar cases filed against it outside California.
- Co-counsel in defense of product liability action for national drug manufacturer in lawsuit alleging damages from birth defects.
- Successfully defended clients in court trial involving claims for breach of contract and fraud arising from conveyance of real property.
- Successfully persuaded insurance company to pay $6M policy limits in the face of disputed coverage and a $30M claim against contractor client, thereby securing a full settlement and release for client
- Secured settlement in excess of $1M for wood treatment company against insurance company following fire damage.
- Successfully negotiated settlement in excess of $2M on behalf of trucking company in litigation against its insurance agent and others for failing to procure the promised coverage.
- Represented agricultural producers in a variety of matters, including:
- Action to enforce warehouse liens, PACA trust rights, and statutory producer's liens against processors;
- Action against pest control advisors and pesticide manufacturers involving pesticide applications;
- Negotiated and drafted licensing and grower agreements for potato seed variety developed by the Texas A&M University; and
- Processed subsidy applications to the California Department of Food and Agriculture.
- Represented several commercial and residential real estate brokers in breach of contract and negligence actions and Department of Real Estate administrative hearings, and currently advise such clients on various day-to-day legal issues.
- Lead trial counsel for several development companies in litigation involving easement rights and other real property issues.
- Represented landowners in partition actions, premises liability, and other real property disputes.
- Lead trial counsel in court trial involving wrongful sale of tax defaulted property.
- Handled numerous business litigation matters, including partnership and shareholder disputes, breach of contract actions, fraud actions, and related matters.
- Handled numerous probate litigation matters, including cases on behalf of trustees and beneficiaries.
- Represented numerous employers in litigation alleging wrongful termination, discrimination claims, trade secret information, and other employment issues.
- Handled all aspects of litigation, including jury trials, involving significant personal injury and wrongful death claims.

- Represented and advised numerous homeowner associations in litigation and on general business matters.
- Represented United States bankruptcy trustee in litigation involving matters affecting creditors' rights.
- Represented business/nightclub owner before city planning commission in highly publicized matter involving revocation of conditional use permit.
- Handled numerous applications with the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control involving person-to-person and premise-to-premise transfers of liquor licenses.
- Obtained verdict of $5.4M as lead counsel in six-week jury trial involving dispute between former business partners of farming operation.

Products Liability

- Lead counsel in wrongful death products liability action for national alcoholic beverage manufacturer. Credited with developing a legal argument that resulted in dismissal of the case with prejudice, which allowed client to secure dismissals or very favorable settlements of other similar cases filed against it outside California.
- Co-counsel in defense of product liability action for national drug manufacturer in lawsuit alleging damages from birth defects.

Professional & Community Service

- Italian Athletic Club
- San Joaquin County Bar Association, Business Law Section
- Stanislaus County Bar Association, Former Member
- San Joaquin County Bar Association, Barristers Committee, Former Member
- California Lawyers Association, Litigation Section
- Greater Stockton Emergency Food Bank, Former Member
- Real Estate Law at San Joaquin Delta College, Instructor

Education

- J.D., University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, 1999
- B.A., University of California at Santa Barbara, 1995

Honors & Rankings

- *Sacramento Magazine*, Top Lawyer, Insurance, Banking & Finance Litigation, General Litigation, Insurance Litigation, Product Liability, 2015-2019, 2023
- Top Advocate Award, 1999

Speaking Engagements / Events

- *COVID-19 Webinar No. 8: Considerations for Businesses & Employers*, Downey Brand COVID-19 Webinar Series, May 22, 2020
- *Basics of Insurance*, Presenter, January 2013
- *Keys to Developing a Successful Law Practice*, Presenter, January 2013

Publications

- *Is Your Insurance Company Really On Your Side?*, California Grocer, Issue 1, February 2016