

**Bilal Zaheer**

Partner

Chicago

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When business relationships unravel, Bilal provides advice to clients that is grounded in principled judgment and strategic tenacity. A seasoned trial attorney with nearly 20 years of courtroom experience, he tailors legal solutions that fit business realities and navigate clients through litigation's toughest moments.

**OVERVIEW**

Bilal is a trial attorney with nearly two decades of experience representing clients in high-stakes, complex commercial disputes, often stemming from failed deals, broken partnerships, and governance breakdowns. He is frequently called to advise on “corporate divorces,” where once-promising business relationships have turned adversarial and the financial and reputational risks are highest. His clients span a range of industries, including technology, life sciences, health care, financial services, industrial, and private equity and include early-stage companies, *Fortune* 500 companies, private equity sponsors and their portfolio companies, executives, and boards.

Bilal advises clients nationwide on disputes involving breach of commercial contracts and related business torts, including fraud, trade secret misappropriation, enforcement of non-solicitation and non-competition agreements, unfair competition, deceptive trade practices, and breach of fiduciary duty.

His corporate litigation matters have involved disputes arising from mergers, acquisitions, going-private transactions, partnerships, joint ventures, LLC operating agreements and have included representing clients in books and records demands, and various post-closing disputes, such as earn-out disputes and claims for breaches of representations and warranties. Bilal has also advised and represented technology vendors and purchasers of technology platforms and services in disputes involving “software as a service” (SaaS) and related technology agreements, including disputes arising from implementation failures, service level obligations and shortfalls, and disputes over AI-enabled functionality in software platforms.

As an experienced trial attorney and member of the Trial Bar for the Northern District of Illinois, Bilal has first-chaired trials and arbitrations across the U.S. and served as lead counsel in bet-the-company disputes. He helps clients efficiently navigate complex issues and delivers legal strategies that align with the client’s business objectives. Bilal brings a focus on outcomes — whether that means resolving disputes before litigation or taking them all the way through trial. What sets him apart is his ability to understand both the legal and human dynamics involved in high-pressure commercial disputes. Bilal serves as a steadying force in times of turbulence, helping to manage risk and protect the business relationships that matter most.

Bilal serves as a professional development partner for the firm's Business Litigation Practice Group and co-chairs the firm's AAPI Affinity Group.

## REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Represented a health care technology startup in federal court litigation with more than \$200 million in a dispute concerning the rights to cutting-edge health care technology; litigated claims for trade secret misappropriation, unfair competition, commercial disparagement, computer fraud, tortious interference, defamation, and breach of six different commercial contracts, including non-competition, non-solicitation, and earnout provisions in a merger agreement.
- Defended a specialty generic pharmaceutical manufacturer in federal court litigation against claims for trade secret misappropriation under federal and state law and a breach of a business-to-business no-hire agreement; asserted counterclaims for breach of contract and tortious interference.
- Defended a Chinese manufacturer and its U.S. subsidiary in a federal jury trial involving claims of trade secret misappropriation and damages claims of more than \$100 million.
- Defended an insurance broker against claims brought by a court-appointed corporate receiver for aiding and abetting in the alleged diversion of millions of dollars in insurance commissions; secured a defense judgment on behalf of the client after a five-day bench trial that was affirmed on appeal involving issues of first impression under Illinois law.
- Represented a bankruptcy court-appointed litigation trustee in a series of federal and state court cases, including trial and appeal, against the corporation's former executives to enforce more than \$70 million in promissory notes executed in connection with funding an employee stock option program; litigated claims and defenses under federal securities laws and Federal Reserve Board regulations.
- Defended a group of former directors and officers of an insolvent medical device company against a \$50 million claim for breach of fiduciary duty and related claims asserted by a post-confirmation litigation trustee.
- Represented a group of shareholders, including the company's former CEO, in a shareholder derivative lawsuit asserting breach of fiduciary duty claims against the corporation's officers and directors for waste of corporate funds and improper related party transactions; secured appellate reversal of the trial court order dismissing the case in an appeal involving issues of first impression under Illinois corporate governance law.

## AWARDS

- National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Best Under 40 Award
- *Super Lawyers*® Illinois Rising Star, Business Litigation
- Leading Lawyers®, Emerging Lawyers

## TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Corporate Governance
- Health Care + Life Sciences
- Litigation + Trial
- Securities Litigation

## ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Business Litigation
- Corporate Governance
- Health Care + Life Sciences

- Litigation + Trial
- Noncompete + Trade Secrets
- Private Equity
- Securities Litigation

## PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Governing board member, The Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms
- Fellow, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (2017)
- Advisory board member, Muslim Bar Association of Chicago
- Member, National Association of Muslim Lawyers (past treasurer, past at-large board member)
- Member, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (past committee co-chair)

## EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

### EDUCATION

- University of Illinois College of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2006, member, *University of Illinois Law Review*
- Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, B.A., *with honors*, 2003, Phi Beta Kappa

### BAR ADMISSIONS

- Illinois

### COURT ADMISSIONS

- Supreme Court of the United States
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Michigan
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Wisconsin

## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Speaker, “Practical Steps for Protecting Trade Secrets,” Troutman Pepper Locke Webinar, August 26, 2025.
- Speaker, “Mid-Level Associate Forum,” Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms, October 26, 2023.
- Speaker, “A Strategic Approach to Reviews and Feedback,” Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms: Mid-Level Associates’ Mini-Conference, August 24, 2022.
- Speaker, “Defending Breach of Fiduciary Duty Claims Against Directors and Officers of Distressed Companies in the Era of COVID-19,” August 12, 2020.

## PUBLICATIONS

- Author, “Delaware Court of Chancery Finds That Crossing the ‘Fine Line Between Glaringly Egregious Conduct and an Aggressive Litigation Position’ Costs Gilead \$1.76 Million in Attorneys’ Fees,” Locke Lord QuickStudy, July 29, 2021.
- Author, “Delaware Supreme Court Rules Stockholders Are Entitled to Books and Records Based on ‘Investigatory Purpose’ Without Stating Objectives of Investigation,” Locke Lord QuickStudy, January 25, 2021.
- Author, “Delaware Court of Chancery Applies Revlon, Not Business Judgment Rule, Despite Stockholder Approval in *In re Mindbody, Inc.*,” Locke Lord QuickStudy. November 12, 2020.
- Author, “COVID-19 and Director Liability: Discharging Fiduciary Duties While Navigating the Financial Distress and Business Uncertainty Caused by the Pandemic,” Locke Lord QuickStudy, April 30, 2020.
- Author, “Practical Considerations for Commercial Litigation during the COVID-19 Era,” Locke Lord QuickStudy, April 9, 2020.

## **MEDIA COMMENTARY**

- Quoted, “Mergers Are About People, Not Paperwork: Here’s Why,” *The Recorder*, February 3, 2025.