

Christopher R. Barth

Counsel

Chicago

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Chris is a recognized leading attorney in aviation and insurance law with more than 30 years of experience representing insurers across a broad spectrum of commercial lines of insurance.

OVERVIEW

Chris' clients include insurers dealing with complex coverage matters, such as aviation, COVID-19 claims, sexual abuse and misconduct, excess workers' compensation, products liability defense, environmental pollution, asbestos, and construction defects. He also counsels clients on corporate matters, including contract drafting and application, regulatory compliance, and employment-related issues.

Chris has extensive experience in evaluating coverage, triggers of coverage, and allocation and aggregation of claims. Additionally, he consults on the impacts of evolving technologies, including cryptocurrency, blockchain, and parametric policies, on the insurance industry.

In the aviation sector, Chris defends aircraft manufacturers, air carriers, lessors, airports, and other aviation-related entities against a wide range of claims, including wrongful death and negligent entrustment. His notable cases include major aviation losses, such as the PenAir 3296 crash in Alaska and the Air France Concorde accident in France.

Chris' work also includes serving as lead counsel to foreign and domestic insurers in high-exposure, multiparty coverage litigation. He has appeared as counsel of record in federal and state courts in 27 different U.S. jurisdictions and has been co-counsel in matters pending in three Canadian provinces. Chris served as an expert on the General Aviation Revitalization Act in a matter pending in the Ontario Provincial Court.

Chris also has considerable experience helping insurers develop and update existing lines of business, including working with underwriters to draft policy forms, attorney billing guidelines, and claims guidelines. Chris also works with clients to present legal updates during annual risk management training courses.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Defended aircraft manufacturers and air carriers in major loss incidents, providing critical legal strategies that mitigated financial and reputational damage.
- Represented insurers in coverage disputes involving construction defects, securing judgments that set precedents for future claims in the construction industry.

- Represented insurers in evaluating coverage for sexual abuse claims against various entities, including religious organizations and educational institutions.
- Worked with insurer clients to develop a parametric insurance policy for a professional sports team and a windstorm program.
- Advised insurers on complex environmental pollution claims, helping to ensure compliance with regulatory standards and achieving settlements that minimized long-term liabilities.
- Consulted with insurers on the impacts of blockchain technology, addressing emerging risks and regulatory challenges, and positioning clients at the forefront of technological advancements in the insurance industry.
- Defended insurers in qui tam actions, navigating intricate whistleblower claims and achieving dismissals that protected clients from substantial financial penalties and reputational harm.
- Counseled an insurer client in the buildout of a new claims team.
- Counsels various corporate clients across a broad range of issues. Chris has worked with a large consumer product client to address independent contractor agreements, employment status considerations, misclassification claims under the Fair Labor Standards Act, and maintenance of customer credit card information. He has worked with a leading food company on issues relating to compliance with the California Transparency in Supply Chain Act and customer privacy issues. Chris represents corporate clients in responding to environmental regulatory enforcement matters. He is routinely retained to provide advice on corporate contracts, including equipment leases.

AWARDS

- *The Best Lawyers in America®*, Aviation Law (2023-2026), Insurance Law (2016-2026)

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Corporate
- Insurance + Reinsurance
- Insurance Aviation
- Litigation + Trial
- Retail

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Asbestos Claims
- Corporate
- Environmental Insurance Coverage
- Environmental Litigation + Enforcement Defense
- Insurance + Reinsurance
- Insurance Aviation
- Litigation + Trial
- Mass Torts Claims + Litigation
- Professional Liability
- Retail

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Member, Illinois State Bar Association
- Member, Kane County Bar Association

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- DePaul University College of Law, J.D.
- University of Iowa, B.B.A.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Illinois

COURT ADMISSIONS

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois, Trial Bar
- U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois