Richard J. Pratt

Partner

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Richard is widely recognized for his creative, efficient, results-oriented approach to high-stakes litigation, and insurers nationwide trust him with their most complex cases. He provides proactive counsel on a broad range of matters and guarantees that his clients and their matters all receive his personal attention.

OVERVIEW

Clients call on Richard to handle significant and often sensitive litigation and mediation in complex cases nationwide. He represents insurance companies in some of the most high-profile matters in the U.S., including ones involving a myriad procedural and substantive issues. He is respected for his hard working and straightforward approach, and his ability to work with opposing counsel when possible. He is particularly skilled in the areas of mass tort, bad faith, and environmental insurance coverage litigation.

For more than 30 years, Richard has successfully defended clients in state courts, federal district courts, and federal courts of appeal. Notably, he secured a favorable precedential opinion in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in a unique pollution liability insurance coverage matter and recently secured victories in Louisiana and Illinois state courts on significant liability claims. He also is known for successfully representing a defendant in a landmark case that effectively ended all tobacco litigation for the insurance industry.

Richard routinely defends clients in matters that have drawn media scrutiny, such as a recent case involving transgender bathroom discrimination, Catholic priest pedophilia litigation, and the Baltimore bridge collapse. He is a go-to attorney for tackling multiplaintiff concussion and brain injury litigation related to football and soccer, often representing insurers as lead national coordinating counsel in high-profile matters, such as National Football League (NFL) concussion litigation. Because of this experience, Richard is also adept at drafting new policy language, including coverages and exclusions, and has particular experience in the EPL and GL spaces.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Successfully prevailed for an insurer on issues of “claim” definition and reporting requirements on a $20 million-dollar summary judgment argument.
- Successfully represented an insurer in the Seattle Big Dig/State Route 99 construction litigation.
- Prevailed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which affirmed, with opinion, a lower court ruling in polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) remediation litigation.
- Successfully represented a defendant in a high-profile transgender bathroom discrimination matter.

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- Successfully represented an insurer client in a lead contamination case alleging hundreds of millions of dollars in damages in duty-to-defend and consent-to-settle issues, winning on motion before the trial court and on appeal.
- Successfully represented a defendant in the landmark case *Liggett Group Inc. v. ACE Property & Casualty Insurance Co.*, effectively ending all tobacco litigation for the insurance industry.
- Successfully represented an insurer against a *Fortune* 200 company in a lawsuit concerning dozens of sites spanning more than 20 years of insurance coverage.
- Obtained summary judgment on reconsideration in an Indiana environmental action involving decades of chemical contamination.
- Successfully represented a surety bond carrier in a major discovery motion leading to favorable settlement of Ponzi scheme claims shortly thereafter.
- Successfully challenged an expert designation effectively gutting plaintiff's complaint in a high stakes Louisiana first party property lawsuit.

AWARDS

- *Chambers USA*, Insurance: Insurer, District of Columbia (2026)
- BTI Client Service All-Star (2023-2024)
- *Legal 500 United States* for Insurance: Advice to Insurers (2023-2025)
- *Best Lawyers in America®:* Insurance Law (2018-2027)
- Super Lawyer, *Law & Politics'* Washington DC Super Lawyers (2014-2017)

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Bad Faith
- Environmental Insurance Coverage
- General Liability
- Mass Torts Claims + Litigation

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Asbestos Claims
- Bad Faith
- Environmental Insurance Coverage
- General Liability
- Litigation + Trial
- Mass Torts Claims + Litigation

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- American Bar Association
- Pennsylvania Bar Association

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, J.D., *cum laude*, 1991, associate and special projects editor, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*
- Duke University, B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1988

BAR ADMISSIONS

- District of Columbia

COURT ADMISSIONS

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

PUBLICATIONS

- “Unilateral Modification of Employment Handbooks: Further Encroachments on the Employment-at-Will Doctrine,” *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, November 1990.

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