



Barbara Hopkinson Kelly

Partner

barbara.kelly@wilsonelser.com

Madison, NJ – 973.735.5765

Barbara Hopkinson Kelly has extensive experience handling complex matters in the environmental, toxic tort, business disputes, insurance and alternative dispute resolution areas.

While Barbara is known for successfully arguing even the most difficult motions, she also is a master negotiator and highly skilled at handling mediations. Barbara brings to the table an innate ability to coordinate ideas and strategies with her clients, forging productive, long-term relationships.

An avid equestrian, skier, hiker and cross-fitter, Barbara applies that same energy and tenacity to her legal practice.

Environmental

Barbara specializes in environmental law. Her extensive experience includes litigation matters, administrative proceedings, compliance and related real estate transactions for a variety of clients in the energy, transportation, hospitality, chemical and health care sectors.

Barbara has served as liaison counsel to numerous Fortune 500 clients, defending class action lawsuits with financial exposures in excess of \$100 million. She has substantial experience with matters under key federal statutes (CERCLA, RCRA, etc.) as well as companion state statutes. Barbara has appeared before federal agencies and appellate panels, including most recently in matters arising under the Mobile Enforcement Settlement Policy. She has counseled large multinational clients on environmental-related workplace issues under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Barbara has significant experience with environmental due diligence and audits, and has cultivated an outstanding team of environmental engineers to assist with technical issues.

Services

- Environmental
- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Insurance & Reinsurance Coverage
- Toxic Tort
- Canada

She works closely with commercial entities during the transaction process to ensure contract provisions are properly drafted and protect against environmental risks, as well as to effectively and efficiently handle environmental contamination problems that are discovered during the transaction process to allow the transaction to proceed as expeditiously as possible. Barbara is skilled at working with foreign corporations that may not have a general counsel presence in the United States.

On the litigation front, Barbara frequently served in the role of Coordinating Counsel. She has handled many national accounts, including one that involved more than 40,000 claims across the United States and required oversight for more than a decade.

Insurance-Reinsurance Coverage / Alternative Dispute Resolution

Barbara has extensive experience in insurance coverage matters, including representation of multinational insurance companies. She has worked with underwriters in developing insurance policies in a myriad of areas and previously was a member of Professional Liability Underwriters Society (PLUS). Her experience in insurance coverage allows her to handle complex cases in various industries. Barbara also has lectured and published in the arena of alternative claims resolution, environmental law and insurance.

Real Estate

Barbara has handled real estate transactions and worked with underwriters in developing insurance policies in a myriad of areas. With respect to real estate litigation, she has handled breach of contract, fraud and related claims in both the residential and commercial real estate contexts.

Education

- Emory University School of Law (J.D., 1984)
 - Recipient of Best Brief Award; Moot Court Society Instructor in Legal Writing
- Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania (B.S. Economics, 1980)

Bar Admissions

- New Jersey

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of the United States
- Supreme Court of New Jersey
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- New Jersey State Bar Association

- The Association of Trial Lawyers of America – New Jersey
- Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey (CIANJ)
- Risk Management Society (RIMS)
- DRI: The Voice of the Defense Bar
- Association for Corporate Growth (ACG)
- Exit Planning Exchange (XPX)
- Mazars Women of Water Summit, 2020

Awards & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America®*, 2024-2026
- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America® Women in Law*, 2025