



Clay A. Coelho

Partner

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Clay Coelho is a litigation attorney with nearly 30 years of experience in a wide variety of practice areas, including complex general liability, transportation, toxic tort, public entity, real estate, lending, professional liability, products liability, housing and habitability claims and insurance bad faith. He focuses his practice on complex litigation matters involving commercial general liability, transportation, premises liability, products liability and professional liability matters throughout the state of California. He also has represented many local governments throughout the state. Clay has tried more than 20 cases in multiple state and federal courts.

Clay has engaged successfully in the defense of Lemon Law claims and related claims of statutory violations on behalf of automotive dealerships and manufacturers. Known for his attention to detail and his careful approach to case evaluation, Clay is well versed in litigating these claims and achieving positive outcomes for his clients.

Complex Tort & General Casualty

Clay provides quick and cost-effective resolutions of potentially protracted liability cases, accelerating turnaround through procedural dismissals, substantive dismissals, successful tenders and negotiated settlements. His experience ranges from catastrophic injury cases, including wrongful death, paraplegic and amputation, to premises liability and security. Once he has determined a resolution plan, Clay focuses on effectively managing the entire litigation process, and when necessary works vigorously in the courtroom to achieve success. He handles premises liability for a prominent multinational technology and e-commerce company.

Transportation

Clay understands the issues facing companies that transport cargo and people, first- and third-party liability, subrogation issues, and the interplay of legislation surrounding vehicle operation and ownership responsibility. He handles transportation matters for two of the

Services

- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Construction
- Insurance & Reinsurance Coverage
- Municipal/Local Government
- Product Liability, Prevention & Government Compliance
- Professional Liability & Services
- Toxic Tort
- Transportation

largest technology companies in the United States.

Professional Liability

Clay commands a clear advantage in handling individual professional liability cases as well as high-volume programs in a comprehensive, purposeful and timely manner. As dictated by each client's needs, Clay works "cross-practice" with other functional areas within the firm to assist with the growing number of challenges that arise in various facets of a case, including cyber risk, privacy rights, employment law, management liability, government affairs, unfair competition, class actions and commercial/transactional services.

Product Liability / Lemon Laws

Clay frequently is hired to litigate large, complex product liability matters in various jurisdictions throughout the country, and employs state-of-the-art computerized defense techniques in connection with product liability and mass tort cases. When appropriate, he calls on the skills of specialized investigators and forensic experts in such areas as engineering design, medicine, biomechanics, full-scale burn testing, forensic failure analysis and information technology. Notably, Clay possesses niche experience in representing clients in Lemon Law litigation. He understands the substance and nuance of such cases – including related laws and regulations – and how best to position his clients for success. Clay understands the delicate calculus that underlies settlements and buybacks and helps clients determine when to settle and when to litigate.

Public Entity Representation

Clay offers municipalities, quasi-public agencies and other government entities services backed by a significant Municipal practice that enjoys an enviable track record. He brings to bear the relevant experience required to thoroughly and sensibly analyze complex issues and to identify appropriate, cost-effective solutions. Clay has represented numerous municipalities in Northern and Central California in matters including law enforcement, dangerous condition of public property and property damage claims, habitability and housing claims.

Insurance Coverage

Clay frequently advises public and private insurance entities regarding intricate coverage issues on both a national and international basis. Drawing on decades of experience, he skillfully interprets the most sophisticated coverage policies and helps mitigate the high-dollar exposures that often accompany them. Clay has handled complex insurance coverage claims including representation of insurers in commercial general liability, property damage, EPL and D&O policies.

Education

- Whittier College School of Law (J.D., 1992)
- San Diego State University (B.A., 1988)

Bar Admissions

- California

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California

Professional Affiliations

- Association of Defense Counsel, Northern California