



Ellen Chang

Of Counsel

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Ellen Chang defends general casualty matters for insurers and self-insured entities on premises liability claims, security matters, hospitality cases, and recreational defense claims, as well as toxic tort matters. She has achieved certification in Wilson Elser's rigorous Mock Trial Invitational, through which our most successful trial lawyers impart their knowledge to those destined to join their ranks.

Ellen joined Wilson Elser after working at insurance defense firms in Maryland, most recently handling the defense of complex premises liability cases involving toxic exposures. Previously, she served as a staff attorney in the Department of Budget and Management at the Office of the Maryland Attorney General, where she litigated collection matters on behalf of the state. Ellen also served as Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable Albert W. Northrop in the Circuit Court of Maryland for Prince George's County.

Prior to her law career, Ellen worked for 10 years as a television news anchor and reporter in Washington, D.C.; St. Louis, Missouri; Reno, Nevada; Davenport, Iowa; and Elko, Nevada.

Education

- University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law (J.D., 2011)
- University of Chicago (B.A., 1995)

Bar Admissions

- Maryland
- District of Columbia

Services

- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Insurance & Reinsurance Defense

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court, District of Maryland

Clerkships

The Honorable Albert W. Northrop (ret.), Circuit Court of Maryland for Prince George's County

Professional Affiliations

- Maryland State Bar Association
- Maryland Defense Counsel Publications Cochair
- Maryland Defense Counsel Judicial Selection Committee Member

Client Wins

Russell and Chang Secure Dismissal with Prejudice in Federal Racial Discrimination Case

Angela W. Russell (Partner-Baltimore) and Ellen E. Chang (Associate-Baltimore) scored a dismissal *with prejudice*, in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, for an Annapolis, Maryland hotel against which plaintiffs claimed allegations of § 1981 racial discrimination. Plaintiffs charged hotel staff and management with racial animus in their communications to plaintiffs and handling of plaintiffs during their patronage of the hotel. In addition to racial discrimination, the Amended Complaint alleged numerous state law claims, including negligence, defamation, and conversion. Ellen composed the Motion to Dismiss and Reply to Plaintiffs' Opposition, highlighting the bare legal conclusions of the Amended Complaint and plaintiffs' bungled attempt to seek the Court's determination of the merits of the case improperly at the pleading stage. In a memorandum opinion, the United States District Court detailed plaintiffs' failure to allege direct evidence of racial discrimination and plaintiffs' raising of little more than vague, conclusory allegations of race-based treatment. Accordingly, the U.S. District Court granted defendants' Motion to Dismiss for failure to state a claim, dismissing *with prejudice* plaintiffs' § 1981 claims and directing the Clerk to close the case. Declining to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over the state law claims, the U.S. District Court dismissed the state law claims without prejudice.

Russell & Chang Secure Dismissal of All Claims Against Housing Authority in Development Dispute

Angela W. Russell (Partner-Baltimore, MD) and Ellen E. Chang (Associate-Baltimore, MD) represented a city Housing Authority and its Executive Director in a multi-party dispute pending in the U.S. District Court, District of Maryland. The gravamen of the Complaint were allegations of federal and state constitutional violations in connection with a contract between a private developer and the City for the development of a neighborhood in the city limits. Several residents of the neighborhood charged the Housing Authority and the City, the private developer, and the City's former mayor with engaging in a campaign to relinquish hundreds of residential properties to the developer by eminent domain, with no

public benefit, and indefinitely encumbering the properties through restrictions to free market real estate and strategies to bypass zoning code regulations. Ellen served as the lead on the Motion to Dismiss for the plaintiffs' failure to state a claim and argued the Motion asserting that the Housing Authority and its Executive Director are not subject to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 claims because the Housing Authority is a not State actor, government defendant, or entity that acted under color of law, and even if it were subject to a § 1983 claim, the factual insufficiencies of the Complaint failed to establish the plaintiffs' entitlements to relief. In a memorandum opinion that addresses the Motion to Dismiss as well as the dispositive motions of the other defendants, the court found that the plaintiffs lacked standing and failed to state a claim as to each cause of action, which included violations of the Takings Clause, Equal Protection Clause, and Due Process Clause as well as nuisance and unjust enrichment. The court granted our Motion to Dismiss entirely, granted or granted/denied in part as moot the other defendants' motions, and dismissed the Complaint.