



Haley B. Mathis

Of Counsel

haley.mathis@wilsonelser.com

McLean, VA – 703.852.7813

Jackson, MS

Haley Mathis handles all aspects of general commercial litigation and insurance defense for insurers and their insureds. She has experience with a wide range, and all aspects, of civil litigation matters from small to complex. She provides clients with innovative and timely strategic counsel to help them make better-informed decisions, resolve complex legal challenges and achieve specific business goals. Haley is committed to building relationships with clients and colleagues that further enable her to resolve claims creatively and efficiently.

Ever mindful of the increasing economic pressures under which clients conduct their businesses, Haley is committed to resolving claims quickly and efficiently. Wilson Elser's practice attorneys regularly access centralized resources and firmwide talent. This type of collaboration frequently spawns innovative and cost-effective solutions to our clients' most complex legal issues.

Prior to joining Wilson Elser, Haley represented insurers in all aspects of general liability and workers' compensation matters.

Education

- University of Mississippi School of Law (J.D., 2016)
- University of Arkansas (B.A., 2013)

Bar Admissions

- Virginia
- Mississippi

Services

- Commercial Litigation
- Insurance & Reinsurance Coverage
- Product Liability, Prevention & Government Compliance
- Professional Liability & Services
- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Lawyers' Liability
- Specialty Professional Risks

Client Wins

Legal Malpractice Claim Dismissed: Mathis and Haney Win for Attorney Removed Weeks Before Trial

Haley Mathis (Of Counsel-McLean, VA) and Erin Haney (Associate-McLean, VA) obtained dismissal of a legal malpractice claim in Fairfax County Circuit Court, Virginia, on behalf of Wilson Elser's attorney-client. The plaintiff in this matter retained our client to represent her in a 2022 divorce action but terminated the representation several weeks before trial. The plaintiff later alleged she was left without counsel during a complex divorce proceeding wherein the Circuit Court divided and distributed the couple's property in accordance with Virginia law governing equitable distribution. Dissatisfied with the result, the plaintiff sued our client, claiming she would have received a more favorable equitable-distribution outcome had he represented her more effectively prior to her terminating him. The court sustained Haley and Erin's demurrer, agreeing with their arguments that an alleged violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct does not give rise to a civil cause of action or a basis for liability, and that the plaintiff failed to adequately plead a breach of any purported duty and a proximate cause of damages beyond conclusory allegations.

Lee and Mathis Achieve Dismissal of Case against Media Client Brought by Chief Counsel for the SSA OIG

Matthew Lee (Partner-McLean, VA) and Haley Mathis (Associate-McLean, VA) represented a media client located in Washington, D.C. The client wrote articles on the alleged retaliation against two whistleblowers by the Office of Inspector General for the Social Security Administration. The plaintiff, chief counsel for the OIG, sued the firm's client for defamation, false light, and infliction of emotional distress. The lawsuit was ultimately transferred to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and assigned to District Judge Mehta. On behalf of the firm's client, Haley and Matt moved to dismiss all claims under Rule 12(b)(6), specifically arguing that the plaintiff's defamation claims were not actionable under Pennsylvania's fair report privilege (the case was originally filed in the Middle District of Pennsylvania); and to the extent that the privilege did not apply to a specific statement, that the plaintiff had failed to plead sufficient facts to support an allegation of actual falsehood (the statements touched on matters of public concern); and, lastly, that the amended complaint failed to allege actual or NY Times malice, which is required for an action by a public official – the plaintiff was, as chief counsel for the SSA OIG, clearly such an official. Further, they argued that the plaintiff's claims for false light and infliction of emotional distress were not actionable for the same reasons that the defamation claims were not actionable. In a March 26, 2025, Order, Judge Mehta granted our client's motion to dismiss in all respects. The order was accompanied by a 64-page memorandum opinion setting forth in detail the Judge's reasoning for granting our client's and the other defendants' motions to dismiss. The entire case was dismissed, and the defendants are waiting to see if the plaintiff will appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

Lee and Mathis Force Dismissal on Eve of Jury Trial in Media Defamation Case

Matthew Lee (Partner-DC Metro) and Haley Mathis (Associate-McLean, VA) forced a plaintiff to voluntarily dismiss his defamation case against a local newspaper on the eve of

trial. A local newspaper published a letter to the editor that drew the ire of a local attorney who filed suit against the firm's clients (the newspaper, publisher and editor) and the author of the letter. Prior to trial, Matt and Haley filed a motion with the court requesting that it rule as a matter of law that the subject matter of the letter to the editor touched on matters of public concern. The trial court agreed their argument, concluding that plaintiff's various lawsuits and allegations against county board members, as well as a financial scandal in a neighboring town, in which the plaintiff was, at the time, the assistant town attorney, were matters of public concern. Thus, plaintiff was required to prove *New York Times* malice by clear and convincing evidence in order to recover presumed or punitive damages; the plaintiff had already stipulated that he was not seeking compensatory damages in the case. In the face of the court's ruling, the plaintiff chose to suffer a voluntary dismissal rather than prosecute a futile attempt to prove that the firm's clients knew that the statements were false or acted with reckless disregard for the truth.

Schlom, Lee and Mathis Prevail on a Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Personal Jurisdiction

Curt Schlom (Partner-Chicago, IL), Matthew Lee (Partner-DC Metro) and Haley Mathis (Associate-McLean, VA) prevailed on a motion to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction on behalf of the firm's client, a corporation having its principal place of business in the Republic of China (Taiwan). The plaintiff purchased an e-bike online and was injured while riding when the seat assembly dislodged. The plaintiff alleged that the assembly was defective in design and/or manufacture and, further, that the firm's client designed and manufactured the product assembly. The team argued that the plaintiff could not present facts establishing that the firm's client "purposefully availed" itself of the privilege of doing business in Virginia such that it was subject to jurisdiction in the Commonwealth. The team further argued that the U.S. Supreme Court's holding in *J. McIntyre Mach., Ltd. v. Nicastro*, 564 U.S. 873, 131 S. Ct. 2780, 180 L. Ed. 2d 765 (2011) made clear that simply placing a product into the "stream of commerce" was not sufficient to satisfy minimum contacts, even if a defendant could have predicted that the product would arrive in the forum jurisdiction. The trial court agreed with the team's argument and dismissed the client from the lawsuit, which remains pending against the retailer of the e-bike in question.