



John R. Clifford

Partner

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San Diego, CA – 619.881.3320

John Clifford is an experienced trial attorney who has a diverse trial practice representing clients in employment disputes, construction accidents and complex civil litigation, as well as product liability, professional liability and general liability matters. He is known for his ability to deal effectively with sensitive issues, building trust and presenting a seamless defense.

John is a third-generation lawyer with more than 30 years of experience. One of ten siblings, he was exposed early to the legal paradigm and has developed a focused approach that enables him to quickly dissect a case and determine a highly effective strategy.

John is a past president of the Association of Defense Trial Attorneys (ADTA), an organization of exceptional defense trial attorneys in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. John is also the past president of San Diego Defense Lawyers (SDDL) and recently completed a three-year term on the board of directors for the DRI: The Voice of the Defense Bar.

Employment & Labor

John's employment practice includes representing clients in cases pending in both state and federal courts and before administrative agencies, including the EEOC, the DFEH and the NLRB. John is regularly called upon to provide guidance to clients with employment concerns in an effort to avoid litigation.

Construction

John's experience includes defending contractors and equipment manufacturers in construction accident lawsuits involving injured workers and wrongful death claims. He also represents owners, developers, manufacturers, contractors, and design professionals and their insurers in construction defect lawsuits.

Services

- Design Professionals
- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Construction
- e-Discovery
- Employment & Labor
- Insurance & Reinsurance Coverage
- National Trial Team
- Product Liability, Prevention & Government Compliance
- Transportation

Transportation

John's transportation cases include the defense of high-exposure personal injury claims, long-haul trucking claims, and damage in transit and packaging claims.

General Liability / Premises

John's clients include insured and self-insured commercial businesses, restaurants, transportation companies, schools and public and private landlords. He defends against personal injury and property damage claims as well as security breaches. A significant part of John's practice is defending schools, religious institutions, and non-profit agencies against allegations of sexual misconduct by their employees. John understands the delicate balance in handling these potentially explosive matters.

Product Liability

John defends product liability cases brought against domestic and international corporations that manufacture or distribute consumer products, medical devices, construction and industrial equipment, recreational products, swimming pool products and household appliances. He makes it a point to know his clients and their operations and stays abreast of the latest government and industry compliance standards.

Professional Liability

Throughout his career, John has defended a variety of professionals, including real estate agents, insurance agents, medical professionals and design professionals.

Education

- University of San Francisco School of Law (J.D., *with honors*, 1986)
- California State University, Chico (B.A., *with honors*, 1982)

Bar Admissions

- California

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California

Professional Affiliations

- San Diego County Bar Association
- International Association of Defense Counsel
- DRI: The Voice of the Defense Bar, Past Board Member, 2007–2009
- Association of Defense Trial Attorneys, Past President, 2007–2008

- Association of Southern California Defense Counsel, Board Member, 2002–2003
- San Diego Defense Lawyers, Past President, 2002–2003

Awards & Honors

- AV® Preeminent™ Rated by Martindale-Hubbell
- Rated by American Lawyer and Martindale-Hubbell as a Top Rated Lawyer in Labor & Employment, 2013
- Selected for inclusion in San Diego *Super Lawyers*, 2007, 2009–2012, 2014-2022

Representative Matters

Defended a commercial real estate developer/property owner in a claim alleging contaminated water involving more than 90 plaintiffs. Obtained a defense verdict for the client and recovered more than \$900,000 on the indemnity claim for his client.

Defended a non-profit social service agency in a claim alleging sexual misconduct regarding a developmentally disabled client by an employee. Resolved the claim professionally and with sensitivity.

Defended more than a dozen claims of alleged sexual misconduct for a religious institution arising out of the amendment to California's statute of limitations in 2002.

Successfully defended an optical lens manufacturer on a \$27 million warranty claim involving an early generation cellular camera device.

Represented a national tool manufacturer on multiple claims involving a plumbing tool, including successful defense of a class action lawsuit.