



## Steven J. Joffe

Partner

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Steve Joffe is an experienced trial lawyer known for his skillful cross-examination techniques. As a cochair of the firm's Los Angeles Employment group, he defends and advises companies that have workplace-related matters, including but not limited to sexual harassment claims, wrongful termination claims and workplace discrimination claims. Steve has brought more than 60 cases to jury trial, involving most areas of civil litigation and has the unique ability and knowledge to adapt his strong litigation and trial skills to catastrophic personal injury claims in the area of Complex Tort & General Casualty.

Steve was a senior shareholder with his previous firm, where he built his commercial litigation business along with a stellar commercial litigation department that he brought with him to Wilson Elser. Known for his insightful ability to critically evaluate a client's case, Steve can precisely determine a client's liability and damage exposure. He also considers communication the most critical aspect of the client relationship. He believes that no matter how well you are defending a client's interests, it can become lost in the process unless the client is involved every step of the way during litigation.

### Employment

Steve has defended and tried cases on behalf of employers and companies across the state of California. He understands the nuances arising out of employer-employee relationships and how best to defend the employer and the employee when an individual employee is the main target of an employment claim and his or her interests are not necessarily aligned with that of the employer.

Steve also provides proactive counseling on labor and employment matters for his clients and as well as training and assistance on investigating workplace claims relative to sexual harassment, wrongful termination and interactive dialogue relating to workplace accommodation. In addition, he provides training and counseling on how best to prevent workplace lawsuits. Steve's clients include one of the world's largest automakers, a

### Services

- Asbestos & Talc
- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Employment & Labor
- National Trial Team
- Securities
- Securities Industry Professionals
- Toxic Tort

national disability device company that distributes and maintains disability devices, a large California restaurant chain, a national nonprofit organization for United States military veterans, and a nationally known post-production company. He also receives work from some of the largest insurers in the country.

Steve is intimately familiar with litigating class action wage-and-hour matters, and has extensive experience litigating and successfully defending California's Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) claims.

Steve has substantial experience litigating matters before the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) and Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE), as well as assisting employers in responding to DFEH investigation inquiries.

Most recently, Steve was a founding partner of Wilson Elser's COVID-19 Task Force. With his Employment & Labor Practice colleagues Bruno Katz, Dean Rocco, Linda Wills and Celena Mayo, he is at the forefront of emerging issues facing employers. Steve has presented several webinars since March 2020 on various aspects of the issue, including workplace safety, temperature screening, return-to-work plans, and maintaining compliance with local health department rules and federal regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In 2014, Steve was named as a top Labor & Employment lawyer in the State of California by the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*.

### **Complex Tort & General Casualty**

Steve has extensive experience trying cases encompassing all aspects of general liability. He has tried numerous premises liability cases as well as auto liability claims for companies in the telecommunications, solid waste and bottled water industries and other large companies throughout California. Steve also has provided litigation training seminars to major third-party administrators on what to recognize in a claims investigation and, once litigated, how to create the best opportunity for prevailing on a litigated claim.

### **Wild Land Fire Litigation**

Steve has acquired extensive experience in defending wild land fire litigation and has represented a top cable provider in the Malibu Canyon Fire litigation since 2008. In 2012 he defended a major American cable telecommunications company in the Nightsky Fire litigation in Ventura County. Throughout the course of this experience, Steve has gained experience on compliance issues relative to General Order 95.

### **Errors & Omissions / Securities Industry**

Steve has extensive experience in all aspects of errors and omissions defense matters including, but not limited to, the defense of financial institutions, security broker-dealers, retail insurance agents and life insurance agents.

### **Toxic Tort, Environmental & Energy**

Steve is the partner administrating and overseeing the defense of asbestos and product-related cases nationwide for the North American subsidiary of one of the world's largest automakers. He has tried and litigated products-related matters and has the experience to

assess the relative exposure to a client early on and provide insightful evaluations during the tenure of the case.

### **Products Liability**

Steve has defended and tried products liability cases over the years and understands the specialized approach to working up and litigating products liability matters. He understands that each claim can have nationwide implications, and he uses his considerable trial experience and knowledge of business and industry to protect his client's brand and reputation.

### **Real Estate**

Steve has extensive experience reviewing real estate leases and subcontracting agreements for major global organizations, as well as regional restaurant organizations, for which he has personally negotiated lease agreements and renewals. He also has significant experience with reviewing sub-contracting agreements, including particular expertise in analyzing indemnification provisions.

### **Education**

- Thomas Jefferson School of Law (J.D., 1982)
- University of Minnesota (B.A., 1979)
  - magna cum laude

### **Bar Admissions**

- California

### **Court Admissions**

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

### **Professional Affiliations**

- Association of Southern California Defense Counsel
- American Bar Association

### **Awards & Honors**

- AV® Preeminent™ Rated by Martindale-Hubbell
- Rated by American Lawyer and Martindale-Hubbell as a Top Rated Lawyer in Labor & Employment and Mass Torts, 2013
- Named a 2014 Top Labor & Employment Lawyer by *The Los Angeles Daily Journal*

