

ALESIA S. SULLOCK

SHAREHOLDER



AREAS OF PRACTICE

Lawyers' Professional Liability
Disciplinary Board Representation
Real Estate E&O Liability
Miscellaneous Professional Liability
Commercial Litigation

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ADMISSIONS

New Jersey
2012

Pennsylvania
2012

U.S. District Court Eastern District
of Pennsylvania
2014

U.S. District Court Middle District
of Pennsylvania
2016

U.S. District Court of New Jersey
2012

EDUCATION

Villanova University School of Law
(J.D., cum laude, 2012)

St. Joseph's University (B.A.,
magna cum laude, 2006)

OVERVIEW

Alesia is a member of the Professional Liability Department where she focuses her practice on the defense of claims made and suits brought against a variety of professionals. She regularly defends attorneys in legal malpractice claims, wrongful use of civil proceedings claims, abuse of process claims and disciplinary matters. Alesia handles a wide variety of real estate matters, including defending real estate agents, appraisers and title agents in litigation and disciplinary matters, and advising corporate clients on real estate and property matters. Additionally, she defends other professionals, including accountants, non-profit organizations and directors and officers, and provides representation in commercial litigation matters.

Alesia regularly presents on risk management and legal malpractice avoidance topics for attorneys throughout Pennsylvania. She publishes extensively in this area as well, including co-authoring a recurring column in *The Legal Intelligencer* on professional liability themes. She is an active member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Professional Liability Committee and Ethics Committee.

In 2012, Alesia earned her *juris doctor* from the Villanova University School of Law where she graduated *cum laude*. While in law school, she was on the executive board of the Villanova Law Moot Court Board and ran the annual Theodore L. Reimel Moot Court Competition. Prior to attending law school, Alesia worked as a corporate underwriter for a mortgage company in Philadelphia, PA.

Alesia attended St. Joseph's University as an undergraduate, and she graduated *magna cum laude* in 2006. She received several academic honors including the Presidential Scholarship and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

HONORS & AWARDS

AV® Preeminent™ by Martindale-Hubbell®

The Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch®, Commercial Litigation 2024-2025

Pennsylvania Super Lawyers Rising Star 2021-2023

ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

Pennsylvania Bar Association, Professional Liability Committee, Ethics Committee

Philadelphia Bar Association, Professional Responsibility Committee

Professional Liability Defense Federation, Professional Liability Committee

YEAR JOINED

2011

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

PA Supreme Court Held that Rule 1.5(A) Does Not Apply Where an Attorney Files a Fee Petition Seeking to Recover Fees on Behalf of His Client from an Adverse Party

Philadelphia - Headquarters
Disciplinary Board Representation
January 1, 2025

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court considered whether an attorney has violated Pennsylvania Rule of Professional Conduct 1.5(a) when the attorney files a petition to recover fees under Pennsylvania's bad faith statute and the court finds that the amou Case Law Alerts, 1st Quarter, Janu

What Are Forbidden Sexual Relations with Clients?

Philadelphia - Headquarters
Lawyers' Professional Liability
Disciplinary Board Representation
November 18, 2024

Sexual Communications Are Sexual Relations, Recent Amendments to RPC 1.8(J)

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Lawyers' Professional Liability
Disciplinary Board Representation
November 1, 2024

Effective November 8, 2024, Rule 1.8(j) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct is amended to include "communications of a sexual nature" within the definition of prohibited sexual relations between lawyers and their clients. Legal Update for Lawyers' Professional Liability – November 2024 is prepared by Marshall Dennehey to provide information on recent legal developments

Attorney Well-Being Doesn't Have to Be Spooky: Steps Attorneys Can Take to Support Mental, Emotional and Physical Health

Philadelphia - Headquarters
Lawyers' Professional Liability
October 29, 2024

Socially Responsible Lawyers: Why You Need to Understand Social Media to Competently Represent Your Clients (Part 1)

Philadelphia - Headquarters
Lawyers' Professional Liability
September 18, 2024

CLASSES/SEMINARS TAUGHT

Attorney Well-Being as a Matter of Professional Competence, Professional Liability Defense Federation Annual Meeting, September 26, 2024

The Defense of Appellate Counsel in Legal Malpractice Actions, Client Seminar, June 4, 2024

Avoiding Legal Malpractice, Monroe County Bar Association, June 25, 2024

The Assessment of Damages in Professional Liability Claims, ILG Live Webinar, May 29, 2024

Socially Responsible: How to Ethically Use Social Media in Your Practice, Attorney Protective, CLE Webinar, May 22, 2024

The Business of Law, Pennsylvania Bar Institute, April 9, 2024

The Business and Ethics Basics of Law Firm Management 2024, Pennsylvania Bar Institute, January 26, 2024

Defending and Avoiding Disciplinary Complaints, Professional Liability Defense Federation Annual Meeting, September 2023

Avoiding Legal Malpractice, Dauphin County Bar Association, August 2023

Avoiding Legal Malpractice, Pennsylvania Bar Association, June 2023

Malpractice Avoidance, Pennsylvania Association of Elder Law Attorneys Winter Conference, February 2023

Legal Malpractice Avoidance, Monroe County Bar Association, June 16, 2021

Avoiding Legal Malpractice, Pennsylvania Bar Institute, June 9, 2021

Trends in Claims Against Lawyers, Client Seminar, July 2018 and January 2019

PUBLISHED WORKS

"What Are Forbidden Sexual Relations With Clients?" *The Legal Intelligencer*, November 18, 2024

"Attorney Well-Being Doesn't Have to Be Spooky: Steps Attorneys Can Take to Support Mental, Emotional and Physical Health," *PLUS Blog*, October 29, 2024

"Socially Responsible Lawyers: Why You Need to Understand Social Media to Competently Represent Your Clients (Part 1)," *The Legal Intelligencer*, September 18, 2024

"'But I Could Have Gotten More!' Damages Speculation in Legal Malpractice Cases," *The Legal Intelligencer*, July 15, 2024

"Your Well-Being Matters: Attorney Mental Health and Professional Competence," *The Legal Intelligencer*, May 15, 2024

"Relevancy and Its Limits," "General Admissibility of Relevant Evidence," "Exclusion of Relevant Evidence," "Character Evidence; Other Crimes, Wrongs, or Acts," and "Methods of Proving Character," *Ohlbaum on the Pennsylvania Rules of Evidence*, 2024, Contributing Author

"Restricting Restrictions: When Attorney Employment Agreements Run Afoul of the Rules of Professional Conduct," *The Legal Intelligencer*, March 21, 2024

"Risk Management in the Practice of Law," *AttPro Ally*, Attorney Protective newsletter, February 27, 2024

"Probable Cause as a Matter of Law in Dragonetti Cases," *The Legal Intelligencer*, November 17, 2023

"You Diligently Protect Your Clients; What About You? Part 2 (The Middle and the End)," *The Legal Intelligencer*, September 15, 2023

"You Diligently Protect Your Clients; What About You? Part 1 (The Beginning) ," *The Legal Intelligencer*, July 14, 2023

"Why Your Mental Health Matters to the Disciplinary Board," *The Legal Intelligencer*, May 16, 2023

"When Disciplinary Counsel Knocks on Your Door, How Do You Respond?" *The Legal Intelligencer*, March 20, 2023

"The Attorney-Client Relationship: Keeping the Lines of Communication Open," *PLUS Blog*, May 9, 2022

"Engagement Agreements As A Legal Malpractice Avoidance Tool," *The Pennsylvania Lawyer*, March/April 2022 Edition

"Reinstating the Two-Year Statute of Limitations for Legal Malpractice Claims," *The Legal Intelligencer*, April 15, 2021

"Ten Ways to Avoid Committing Legal Malpractice in a Pandemic," *PLUS Blog*, January 18, 2021

"Responsive Pleadings," *Pennsylvania Civil Pre-Trial Practice*, 2018 - present, Reviewing Author

"Common Evidentiary Issues at Trial," *Pennsylvania Civil Trial Practice*, 2018, Reviewing Author, 2019 - present, Contributing Author

"Pennsylvania Legal Malpractice Claims: Moving Away From a (Nearly) Automatic Four-Year Statute of Limitations," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 24, No. 2, June 2018

Pennsylvania Legal Malpractice Handbook, 2017 Edition, 2019 Edition, Published by Marshall Dennehey Warner Coleman & Goggin, Co-author

Case Law Alerts, regular contributor, 2015-present

RESULTS

Defense jury verdict in Philadelphia on a legal malpractice claim.

Lawyers' Professional Liability

May 30, 2023

The plaintiffs had hired our attorney client to represent them in a property damage case against contractors and an insurance company after, as they claimed, the roof of their property was left open and water damage was sustained. The plaintiffs argued that their attorney failed to faithfully represent them and caused them to lose their claims against the contractors.

Unanimous Defense Verdict in Legal Malpractice Case

Lawyers' Professional Liability

May 30, 2023

We secured a unanimous defense verdict in a legal malpractice case stemming from underlying property damage litigation. The plaintiffs rejected a \$350,000 settlement before the jury found for our client.

Claims against real estate agent dismissed.

Real Estate E&O Liability

December 2, 2021

Our attorneys obtained dismissal of claims against a real estate agent arising from the agent's representation of a buyer in connection with the purchase of a home in Philadelphia. Following the purchase of the property, the buyer discovered numerous undisclosed issues with the home and commenced suit against the seller and the seller's agent.

Accounting malpractice claim barred by the statute of Limitations.

Accountants' Professional Liability

February 9, 2021

We obtained dismissal of an accounting malpractice claim on preliminary objections in the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. The plaintiffs alleged that their accountant improperly prepared their tax returns—as married filing jointly—and failed to claim business losses, that resulted in an unexpected tax liability being owed.

Dismissal of all claims against attorney in a consumer rights lawsuit.

Miscellaneous Professional Liability

May 18, 2020

The plaintiff was named as a defendant in a debt collection action for failing to pay her attorney's legal bills. Judgment was entered against her but never fully enforced. More than five years later, our client filed a Praecipe to Issue Writ of Revival and then mistakenly filed a Praecipe for Writ of Execution before the judgment was revived by the court.

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Obtained summary judgment in numerous complex legal malpractice matters on the basis that plaintiffs' claims were barred by the statute of limitations following application of the discovery rule.

Obtained a defense verdict following a three week jury trial in a complex legal malpractice action, arising from allegations of an attorney's failure to provide competent representation resulting in the loss of an underlying claim against a car dealership auditing company, purportedly causing twenty million dollars in damages.

Obtained a defense verdict on behalf of an attorney accused of inadequately representing a police officer in a grievance proceeding following his dismissal from the police force.

Obtained summary judgment in a complex legal malpractice matter arising from an underlying telecommunications litigation which spanned thirteen years and included two appeals.

Obtained dismissal of plaintiff's legal malpractice claims arising from an underlying release and medical malpractice claim, on the eve of trial, based on arguments made in a dispositive motion in limine.

Obtained affirmance on appeal of the dismissal of claims against an attorney pursuant to Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 233.1.

Successfully represented clients in numerous disciplinary matters, resulting in findings of no discipline.