

MICHAEL J. CONNOLLY

SHAREHOLDER



AREAS OF PRACTICE

Automobile Liability
Premises & Retail Liability
Trucking & Transportation Liability
General Liability
Miscellaneous Professional Liability

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Moosic, PA 18507

ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania
2010

U.S. District Court Middle District
of Pennsylvania
2010

EDUCATION

Drexel University Kline School of
Law (J.D., 2010)

University of Scranton (B.A., B.S.,
cum laude, 2007)

HONORS & AWARDS

Best Lawyers in America®,
Personal Injury Litigation –
Defendants
2024

Pennsylvania Super Lawyers
Rising Star
2015-2020

OVERVIEW

A member of the firm's Casualty Department, Mike primarily handles matters involving premises liability, automobile, and general liability. Mike regularly handles commercial motor vehicle and trucking cases including transportation fleets engaged in interstate trucking, waste hauling, shuttle and bus operators, and rental vehicle fleets. In addition to commercial motor vehicle cases, he also defends commercial businesses and properties on their liability claims, including hotels, resorts and others within the hospitality industry. Mike also handles the defense of claims on behalf of various public utility organizations within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Mike has handled wrongful death and catastrophic injury cases, surface mining accidents, motor vehicle, product liability and underinsured/uninsured (UIM/UM) motorists claims. He routinely presents seminars to insurers and companies on the subject of risk management and best practices associated with safety. Mike's civil litigation experience previously included representing insurance carriers and their insureds in the firm's professional liability department in the field of municipal and civil rights litigation.

An honors graduate of the University of Scranton, Mike then received his *juris doctor* from Drexel University with distinction in the field of Insurance Law. Mike clerked for the Honorable Chester T. Harhut, former President Judge of Lackawanna County and worked for the Lackawanna County District Attorney. Admitted to practice in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, Mike is also a member of the American Bar Association, Pennsylvania Bar Association and Lackawanna County Bar Association. Mike previously worked with the Law School Admission Council as an administrator of the Law School Admission Test for prospective law students, as well as with the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners on the Multi-state Professional Responsibility Exam.

Mike was selected as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer Rising Star for six consecutive years between 2015 and 2020, and in 2024 was selected to the Best Lawyers in America® for Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants.

ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

American Bar Association

Lackawanna County Bar Association

Pennsylvania Bar Association

YEAR JOINED

2010

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Expert Medical Evidence Mandatory on Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress Claims

Scranton
General Liability
December 1, 2016

Defense Digest, Vol. 22, No. 4, December 2016 By Michael J. Connolly, Esq.* Key Points: Defense Digest, Vol. 22, No. 4, December 2016. Defense Digest is prepared by Marshall Dennehey Warner Coleman & Goggin to provide information on recent legal developments of interest to our readers.

PUBLISHED WORKS

"Expert Medical Evidence Mandatory on Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress Claims," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 22, No. 4, December 2016

RESULTS

Defense prevails in construction defect case.

Architectural, Engineering & Construction Defect Litigation
February 14, 2023

We obtained summary judgment on a construction defect claim in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania. The court dismissed the plaintiffs' claims against the defendant, a homebuilder, in their entirety for the plaintiffs' failure to adequately prove breach of contract, breach of express and implied warranties, fraud in the inducement, wrongful conversion and various alleged violations of the Pennsylvania Unfair Trade Practices Act.

Summary Judgment for Marshall Dennehey Client Only, in Multi-defendant Action.

General Liability
May 11, 2018

We obtained summary judgment in a general liability case in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. The plaintiff was an employee of a recently-renovated resort when a solid wooden panel fell down and struck her in the head, causing serious injuries. The plaintiff alleged improper design, manufacture, and installation of the panel against a number of the defendant contractors and subcontractors. It was unclear as to which defendant actually installed the panel.

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Obtained a compulsory nonsuit at the close of the plaintiff's case during a jury trial in Luzerne County. The case stemmed from a fall that occurred in a grocery store. It was undisputed that the plaintiff experienced a hard fall after stepping on a bottle containing an energy drink while shopping. Plaintiff suffered several injuries including serious nerve damage to both legs as a result of the fall. Although the plaintiff had alleged both actual and constructive notice of the allegedly dangerous condition created by the bottle on the floor, she failed to introduce any evidence beyond mere speculation of that notice, and the court granted the nonsuit.

Successfully obtained summary judgment on behalf of commercial property owners under the immunity available to owners who hire independent contractors to perform work on the owners' property. Plaintiff was operating an electric saw as part of a building demolition project when he lost his footing and fell from a roof sustaining serious injuries. We demonstrated why none of the available exceptions to the immunity rule applied to the subject property owners. Summary judgment was granted under Pennsylvania's recognition of immunity for property owners who hire competent independent contractors to complete a project, when the owners retain no control over project details, supervision, or safety.

Successfully obtained summary judgment on behalf of a real estate company in a property destruction case in which a moving company was hired to enter, clean, and winterize a property prior to the real estate company's listing the property for sale. Instead, the moving company went to the wrong house and emptied and destroyed all of the Plaintiff's belongings and contents. Plaintiff sued various defendants, including the real estate company which had no role in hiring the moving company, nor any knowledge of the wrongfully destroyed property. Plaintiff attempted to connect all of the defendants involved through various theories of agency, conspiracy and identity theft. Summary judgment was granted in favor of the real estate company after it was shown that Plaintiff failed to establish the requisite burden of proof for the claims under Pennsylvania's agency laws, as well as the laws on identity theft and conspiracy.

