

## KIARA K. HARTWELL

SHAREHOLDER



### AREAS OF PRACTICE

Workers' Compensation

### CONTACT INFO

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Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

### ADMISSIONS

New Jersey  
2015

Pennsylvania  
2015

U.S. District Court Eastern District  
of Pennsylvania  
2015

### EDUCATION

Rutgers Law School (J.D., cum  
laude, 2014)

New York University (B.A., 2009)

### HONORS & AWARDS

New Jersey Super Lawyer Rising  
Star  
2025

The Super Lawyers list is issued by Thomson Reuters. A description of the selection methodology can be found [here](#). No aspect of this advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

### OVERVIEW

Kiara devotes her entire practice to workers' compensation litigation on behalf of employers, insurance carriers and self-insureds. She authors the New Jersey updates for *What's Hot In Workers' Comp*, the firm's monthly newsletter detailing significant developments in workers' compensation law, and has also been published in *CLM Magazine*.

Kiara sits on the New Jersey State Bar Association's Workers' Compensation Executive Committee, a group charged with studying and developing beneficial changes in the administration and procedures pertaining to workers' compensation.

Kiara earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from New York University, with minors in Mathematics and Chemistry. She went on to graduate *cum laude* and earn her *juris doctor* from Rutgers School of Law. While in law school, Kiara served as a Notes and Comments Editor of the *Rutgers University Law Review* and was a semifinalist in the Hunter Moot Court Competition.

During law school, Kiara gained valuable experience as a law clerk assisting family law attorneys. She also worked for a national insurance company drafting discovery motions and answers to discovery requests, and attended various hearings and depositions. Kiara externed with Chief Justice Stuart Rabner of the New Jersey Supreme Court, where she wrote memorandums to the Court, recommending the grant or denial of certifications.

Prior to joining Marshall Dennehey, Kiara served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable William E. Nugent, J.A.D. Upon completion of the clerkship term, she worked for an insurance defense firm in Philadelphia, handling a variety of cases in the areas of construction coverage, premises liability and motor vehicle litigation.

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## ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

Asian Pacific American Bar  
Association of Pennsylvania  
(APABA-PA)

New Jersey State Bar Association,  
Workers' Compensation Executive  
Committee member

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## YEAR JOINED

2016

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

### New Jersey Workers' Compensation Legislation Update

**Mount Laurel  
Workers' Compensation  
October 1, 2025**

Below are the more notable pending New Jersey workers' compensation bills in the 2024-25 session, with 2025 updates in bold. What's Hot in Workers' Comp, Vol. 29, No.

### Appellate Division Affirms 74% Disability Award in Custodian's Workers' Compensation Case

**Mount Laurel  
Workers' Compensation  
September 1, 2025**

In Brooks v. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, the Appellate Division upheld a workers' compensation judge's decision finding the petitioner 74% permanently disabled as a result of his custodial work for Rutgers. What's Hot in Workers' Comp, Vol. 29, No.

### Appellate Division Upholds Dismissal of Construction Accident Claims Against Employer and Municipality

**Mount Laurel  
Workers' Compensation  
September 1, 2025**

The New Jersey Appellate Division affirmed three trial court orders dismissing claims brought by James Weiss, a retired firefighter and employee of Altona Blower & Sheet Metal Works, who was seriously injured while installing a firefighter tra What's Hot in Workers' Comp, Vol. 29, No.

### Appellate Division Affirms Dismissal of Construction Zone Death Suit Against employer and Engineering Firms Based on Workers' Compensation Bar and Failure to Serve Affidavits of Merit.

**Mount Laurel  
Workers' Compensation  
August 1, 2025**

On July 11, 2014, Michael Alexander was struck and killed by a sweeper truck while working in an active construction zone on the New Jersey Turnpike. Northeast Sweepers owned the truck, which was driven by Christopher Hackett. Crisdel Group, Inc. What's Hot in Workers' Comp, Vol. 29, No.

### Appellate Division Affirms Dismissal of Coverage Claims, Citing Intentional Injury Exclusion and Supreme Court's Rodriguez Decision

**Mount Laurel  
Workers' Compensation  
July 1, 2025**

Michael Bunting injured his foot while working for Emil A. Schroth, Inc. He was paid workers' compensation benefits by Schroth's carrier, New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Company. What's Hot in Workers' Comp, Vol. 29, No.

## CLASSES/SEMINARS TAUGHT

*From Interview to Offer: Navigating Clerkships, Networking & Career Success* - Panelist, Rutgers Law School Minority Student Program, February 12, 2025

*Workers' Compensation May Day Seminar*, panelist, Bridgeton Workers' Compensation Court, May 1, 2024

## PUBLISHED WORKS

"Top 10 Developments in New Jersey Workers' Compensation in 2021," Martindale-Hubbell, December 1, 2021

"Consulting the Comp Crystal Ball: What Does the Future Hold for Current COVID-19 Workers' Compensation Claims," *CLM Magazine*, June 2021

"New Jersey Medical Provider Claims Are Contingent Upon Jurisdiction Over Underlying Claim," *Defense Digest*, January 2021, Vol. 27, No. 1

"What's the Alternative? Weighing the Benefits and Risks of Return-to-Work Programs," *CLM Magazine*, February 2019

"Temporary Total Disability Benefits Contingent Upon Proof of Lost Wages," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March 2018

"Injuries Occurring During Mutually Beneficial Task Are Compensable Even on Day Off," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 23, No. 4, December 2017

"The Idiopathic Defense: The Most Overlooked Tool in NJ Workplace Injury Litigation," *New Jersey Law Journal*, Workplace Injury Litigation Supplement, November 7, 2016

## RESULTS

### Favorable decision in New Jersey workers' compensation matter.

#### **Workers' Compensation November 23, 2020**

The case involved a compensable claim for right hip and shoulder fractures sustained in a fall. At issue was the level of permanent disability for the compensable injuries and the relatedness of a subsequent hip replacement surgery. The petitioner's demand before trial was more than \$450,000, plus almost \$78,000 for medical expenses. The employer's final offer was \$180,000. After a three-day trial in Ocean County, the judge awarded permanency benefits totaling less than \$153,000.

### Workers' compensation defense verdict for a prominent health care system.

#### **Workers' Compensation May 18, 2020**

The petitioner filed a motion for additional medical and temporary disability benefits, essentially alleging she was permanently and totally disabled from prior compensable shoulder and leg injuries. After a three-day trial and extensive briefing, the judge dismissed the motion. He determined that, despite the compensable injuries, the petitioner had plateaued medically and was not entitled to any further benefits.