



Melicent B. Thompson

MANAGING PARTNER

860-760-8446

mthompson@gllawgroup.com

Melicent currently serves as Gfeller Laurie LLP's Managing Partner.

She has more than 26 years of experience as a litigator and counselor to corporations and educational institutions. Her broad litigation experience in Connecticut and Georgia state and federal courts includes business disputes, employer, professional and executive liability claims, defense of educational and financial institutions, and general liability issues. Her insurance coverage law practice encompasses all areas of coverage advice in both the first- and third- party contexts and related litigation services, including declaratory judgment actions, defense of bad faith claims and reinsurance matters. Melicent also has substantial appellate court experience, having briefed and argued appeals before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and both the Connecticut Supreme and Appellate Courts.

Melicent also provides corporate counseling to clients in navigating post-data breach cyber liabilities under various state and federal laws and assisting them with use of technology vendors to define the scope of the breach, contain liability exposure and develop an effective public relations plan consistent with legal requirements.

Experience

- Successfully prosecuted, through appeal to the Connecticut Supreme Court, a motion for summary judgment on behalf of an insurer, with the Connecticut Supreme Court affirming the trial court's decision that a commercial general liability policy does not afford defense or indemnity coverage for data breach claims, an issue of first impression under Connecticut law.
- Defended, through trial, owner of closely held corporation in action by widow of former co-owner seeking to compel disgorgement of profits and alleging unfair business practices prior to former co-owner's death. Case involved complex business valuation analyses and related expert discovery and trial testimony.
- Served as investigation counsel for an educational institution regarding an employee's claims of gender discrimination and hostile work environment including preparing post-investigation recommendations as to resolving the individual's claims as well as addressing broader institutional management and workplace culture issues.
- Counseled a corporate client in employment law and third party liability issues arising from employee's theft in the course of employment including successfully accessing dishonesty bond coverage to cover the employer-client's liability exposure in full and achieving termination of the employer-employee relationship without criminal or employment law exposure to the employer-client.
- Investigated and counseled an institutional client as to bullying allegations, the related termination of an employee, and strategies for addressing terminated employee's threatened wrongful termination claim.
- Leveraged a highly complex motion for summary judgment prepared on behalf of an insurer-client in a declaratory judgment action in order to favorably position the insured in settlement negotiations in the underlying complex construction defect matter.
- Achieved favorable settlement for insured-client in a personal injury case involving a vehicle versus pedestrian accident and serious physical injuries to the pedestrian including long-term coma and post-coma treatment.

Honors

- CALI Excellence for the Future Award Recipient
- University of Connecticut Law School Foundation Award for "Exceptional Achievement in Scholarship"

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Claims and Litigation Management Alliance

- Connecticut Bar Association
- Defense Research Institute (DRI)

Civic Activities

- Bay Path University Business Advisory Council Member
- *Pro Bono* General Counsel to the Board of Directors of Gifts of Love, a local charity devoted to providing basic necessities to the working poor in central Connecticut.

Publications

- “What 2020 Hath Wrought: Litigation and Legislation Regarding Insurance Coverage for COVID-19 Business Income Losses,” *Journal of Emerging Issues in Litigation*, March 2021.
- “Bad Faith Claims Increasing in Connecticut for UM/UIM Complaints,” *Insurance Coverage Law Center*, November 2020.
- “Special Report: Legal and Insurance Issues in the Age of COVID-19,” *Ski Area Management: The Voice of the Mountain Resort Industry*, August 2020 (PDF).
- “Bankruptcy’s Impact On Insurers’ Interpleader Options Under First Circuit Law,” *FETTI Newsletter* (Winter 2006)
- “Proper Claim Handling Makes All The Difference In Avoiding Exposure Under New York Law For Bad Faith Failure To Settle Within Policy Limits,” *FETTI Newsletter* (Winter 2005)
- “Arbitrating Insurance Disputes In The Second Circuit: ‘Choice Of Law’ Provisions’ Affect On Federal Arbitration Act,” *FETTI Newsletter*, November, 2003.
- Co-author, “Congress Acts to Clarify Lender and Fiduciary Liability under CERCLA”, *Afire News* (November/December 1996)

Speaking Engagements

- “Insurance Bad Faith and Legal Ethics”, National Business Institute Conference, Hartford, CT, December 2017
- “Failure to Settle Within Policy Limits”, Perrin Conference, Philadelphia, PA, May 2017
- Women in the Law Panel, Perrin Conference, Philadelphia, PA, May 2017
- Women in the Law Conference Boston, MA, Fall 2017
- Annual conference of The National Forum for Environmental and Toxic Tort Issues (FETTI)

Capabilities

Practice Areas

- Insurance
- Insurance Coverage
- Financial Services
- Commercial Litigation
- Professional Liability

Credentials

Admitted to Practice

- Connecticut
- Georgia
- United States District Court, District of Connecticut
- United States District Court, Middle District of Georgia
- United States District Court, Northern District of Georgia
- United States District Court, Southern District of Georgia
- United States Court of Appeals, Second Circuit

Education

- University of Connecticut, JD, 1996, *with honors*
 - *Connecticut Law Review*, Editor-in-Chief
- Georgetown University, BS, Foreign Service, 1989