



## **Ricardo A. Woods**

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### **Services**

Mass Torts / Hazardous Substances, Consumer Finance Litigation & Compliance, Government Affairs & Investigations, Insurance Litigation & Coverage, Personal Injury, Product Liability,

Ricardo is a defense trial lawyer and practices in Burr and Forman's Torts and Insurance Practice Group (TIPS) with an emphasis on, product and toxic tort liability, insurance litigation and government liability.

Ricardo serves as the Chief Legal Counsel and City Attorney for the City of Mobile. He was appointed to this position by Mayor William S. Stimpson in 2013. In his capacity as City Attorney, Ricardo manages the City's outside counsel at multiple law firms, serves as chief legal adviser to the executive branch of the local government, and serves as the executive director of the City of Mobile's internal legal department. He understands the internal pressure of being a part of the everyday cost and operating systems of a client.

Ricardo's insurance litigation experience includes issues related to defalcation, bad faith, fraud and coverage agents. His product liability and toxic tort experience includes the defense of cases involving industrial grade machinery, warranty claims, automobile components, solvents and other chemical agents.

He is a creative problem solver who provides his clients with innovative and cost effective solutions and strategies. He is no stranger to the courtroom and he is experienced in handling all stages of complex litigation. Ricardo has first-chair jury trial experience, as well as extensive pre-trial litigation experience. He has successfully defended matters, which included allegations of wrongful death, paralysis, consumer protection claims, financial services, severe bodily injuries, and catastrophic property loss.

In addition to his service to the bar and his government service, Ricardo has served as a leader in the

non-profit community over the years as the President of 100 Black Men of Greater Mobile, Inc., Chair of Mobile United, President of the Vernon Z. Crawford Bay Area Bar Association (an NBA affiliate), Chairman of AL.com's first Gulf Coast Young Professional's Summit, and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Prichard Preparatory School.

As an active member of DRI, Ricardo is a member of the Diversity Committee (Vice-Chair), the Government Liability Committee, and Toxic Tort and Environmental Steering Committee. He is also a member of the IADC and FDCC.

Ricardo is a native of Natchez, Mississippi. He attended both law school and college as a recipient of leadership scholarships. While in law school, he was a member of the school's nationally ranked Trial Team, and he served as the Chief Judge of the Trial Board.

## **Publications**

- DRI: Navigating Your New Life as Corporate Counsel
- Co-Author, "Trouble in Paradise: The Increasingly Dangerous Landscape for Pesticide Exposure," *Covered Events*: DRI Insurance Law Committee, October 2018
- *DRI Insurance Bad Faith and Extra-Contractual Liability Conference*: Crystal Ball: The Biggest Recent Bad Faith Decisions and Cases to Watch
- *National Business Institute's Legal Ethics: Hot Topics and Current Events*: Attorney Fees in the Current Market
- "Identifying and Solving Diversity Issues in Law," Profiles in Diversity Journal, May/June issue

## **Education**

J.D., Cumberland School of Law at Samford University, (2004)

B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, (2000)

## **Licensed In**

Alabama, Mississippi

## **Honors & Awards**

- *Martindale-Hubbell* AV Preeminent, Peer Review Rating
- Young Alumnus of the Year for Cumberland School of Law (2019)
- Leadership Alabama, Class XXX (2019)
- *Alabama Super Lawyers*, Personal Injury Defense: Products (2014-2015)
- *Alabama Super Lawyers* "Rising Star," Civil Litigation Defense (2010), Personal Injury Defense: Products (2011-2013)
- Mobile's "Top 40 Under 40," Inaugural Class Member (2009)
- Leadership Mobile, Graduate (2010)

- Volunteer Lawyer Program Distinguished Service Award (2011)
- *Mid-South Super Lawyers*, Personal Injury Products: Defense (2016-2017)

## **Professional Associations**

Defense Research Institute (DRI)

DRI Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Chair (2019)

Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel (FDCC)

International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC)

Alabama State Bar

American Bar Association, Fellow

Mississippi Bar Association

Mobile Bar Association

National Bar Association

Alabama Defense Lawyers Association, Board of Directors (2011-2012)

## **Experience**

- Retained to defend a State operated facility in wrongful death action involving the drowning death of a minor.
- Secured summary judgment and successfully served as national medical counsel in mass tort action involving air filtration system and alleged toxic chemical exposure on an aircraft.
- Negotiated and amicably resolved a case involving a major insurance carrier in a lawsuit that included claims of defalcation and loss of coverage.
- Resolved a complex products liability case after litigating in both state and federal court in the process of defending a manufacturer of a nationally distributed household product in triple wrongful death case involving minors.
- Successfully defended a boiler manufacturer and a companion maintenance company in a wrongful death case (secured summary judgment).
- Retained as trial counsel in a product liability action involving a seatbelt manufacturer where a minor suffered permanent paralysis.
- Retained to defend product liability a manufacturer in law suit arising from the use of a portable breathable air system in an industrial setting (secured dismissal).
- Retained by financial institution to recover assets seized by the Department of Justice.
- Retained by financial institution to defend against Telephone Consumer Protection Act claims.
- Retained by distributor of manual engine lift in product liability suit arising from product misuse.
- Retained to defend an owner in a catastrophic loss case involving an alleged design defect of multilevel collar system designed to secure an 800-ton floating vessel.
- Retained as counsel by defendant distributor involved in a homicide in a liquor liability action in rural Alabama (summary judgment).
- Retained to defend natural gas pipeline owner in wrongful death case of pipeline construction worker.
- Retained to defend trucking company in wrongful death action arising from multi-vehicle accident in

rural Alabama.

- Retained to defend a highway contractor in wrongful death action arising from the death of a law enforcement officer (secured dismissal).
- Retained by oil and gas provider to investigate multiple deaths in an industrial setting.
- Served as coordination counsel by a multi-national corporation to investigate and defend a series of claims associated with occupational injuries.
- Retained as trial counsel to defend against claims of real estate fraud in Clarke County, Alabama (summary judgment).
- Retained as trial counsel in product liability action involving hand held cigarette lighter (secured dismissal).
- Retained in multi district litigation/product liability action arising from the installation of "Chinese Drywall" in residential homes(secured a dismissal).
- Retained by defendant in multi district litigation/products liability suit arising from the use of the manufacturer's clothing near secondary heat sources.
- Hired to defend a drug screening laboratory in a defamation action filed by third party test subject.
- Retained to defend in a vehicle rollover case involving tires manufactured outside of the United States.
- Retained as counsel for financial institution to defend against breach of contract and fraud claims.
- Retained by industrial printing company to defend a wrongful death action involving the death of a subcontractor's employee.
- Retained as trial counsel in wrongful death case involving a homicide inside a State operated facility.
- Retained to defend title insurance company against allegations of fraud arising from a commercial real estate transaction.
- Retained as local counsel in a product liability lawsuit involving chemical burns associated with product misuse.
- Retained and successfully represent defendants in double homicide related to liquor liability claims.
- Retained as trial counsel to defend wrongful death action involving a third party criminal act in Escambia County, Florida.
- Retained by product manufacturer to defend product liability action arising from explosion of mobile gas unit.

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