



Corey T. Hickman

Member

Chicago

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Corey T. Hickman concentrates his practice in the areas of general business and commercial litigation. Corey has litigated in state and federal courts throughout the country, and has substantial experience in arbitration.

Corey has extensive knowledge and experience involving the enforcement of post-employment restrictive covenants in various state and federal jurisdictions, including declaratory judgment actions and requests for injunctive relief. Corey's experience includes breach of contract actions and related claims for declaratory relief, business torts, corporate and limited liability company disputes, legal malpractice defense, and other statutory violation claims, including defending class action claims under the Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA).

Corey has substantial experience defending BIPA class actions including representing technology companies. Most recently he represented a national public health care company litigating novel BIPA jurisdictional issues and other substantive BIPA issues, including the statute of limitations, claim accrual, and the government contractor exception. Corey also handles BIPA "mass action" proceedings in arbitration.

Corey's practice includes a wide variety of professional liability matters, including the defense of retail and wholesale insurance agents and brokers in professional malpractice actions. Cozen O'Connor's widespread geographic presence has allowed him to assist on professional liability cases in a number of state and federal jurisdictions, and develop a strong local knowledge of professional liability law and practice throughout the country.

Corey's experience also includes appellate advocacy. He has successfully prosecuted and defended appeals in Illinois, Nebraska, and Ohio, involving a wide range of issues.

Corey takes great pride in his *pro bono* activities on behalf of the firm. His *pro bono* work includes assisting tenants to recover wrongfully withheld security deposits, assisting immigrants seeking asylum in the United States, and volunteering at various events for Chicagoland *pro bono* organizations.

In addition to his litigation practice, Corey has transactional experience assisting small businesses in a wide range of areas, including entity formation, business sales and acquisitions, and contract drafting.

Corey received his law degree, *summa cum laude*, from Northern Illinois University College of Law in 2014, graduating first in his class. While in law school, he was a three year member of the Dean's List and was assistant editor to the *Law Review*.

Experience

Secured dismissal with prejudice of claims brought against a timekeeping/payroll software services provider by a customer that experienced a service outage after the provider was the victim of a criminal ransomware attack. Asserting that the provider was grossly negligent in "allowing" criminals to attack its systems, the plaintiff unsuccessfully sought to expand the provider's obligations to include the customer's own failure to pay its employees correctly.

Practice Areas

- Commercial Litigation
- Privacy Litigation – Emerging Trends
- Professional Liability

Education

- Northern Illinois University College of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2014
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, B.A., 2011

Bar Admissions

- Illinois

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court -- Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court -- Eastern District of Michigan
- U.S. District Court -- North Dakota

Awards & Honors

- Best Lawyers in America "Ones to Watch" 2021-2025
- Illinois Super Lawyers Rising Star 2024

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Obtained a TRO in favor of the nation's leading manufacturer and distributor of barcoded and variable information labels in an action against a former sales manager and a former salesman who copied 50 customer lists and sales reports and transferred them to their new employer in violation of non-disclosure and non-competition covenants. After we conducted expedited discovery and filed a motion for preliminary injunction, Defendants agreed to a settlement pursuant to which they promised to refrain from soliciting our client's customers, return or destroy our client's records, allow a digital forensic consultant to verify that they had done so, and pay a portion of our client's legal fees.

Secured an agreement by Plaintiffs to dismiss our investment fund client from a \$50 million securities fraud class action seeking the appointment of a receiver to take possession and control of its business and assets and those of several related entities. Plaintiffs agreed to the dismissal after we filed a motion to dismiss the complaint on the grounds that it did not sufficiently allege any wrongdoing by our client which, we argued, was a mere victim of the fraud rather than a participant.

Substantially assisted in complex litigation involving the defense of a retail insurance broker against professional malpractice, negligent misrepresentation, and fraud claims relating to the placement of a technology errors and omissions policy. This case spanned more than five years, and ended in a defense verdict.

Obtained dismissal with prejudice of a high-profile case filed against a group of investors who secured zoning approval for the construction and operation of a firearms safety training and firing range in suburban Chicagoland, described as the "Apple store of the firearms industry." An advocacy group sued in an effort to stop the project, arguing that the zoning approval unconstitutionally violated the rights of neighboring property and business owners. The years-long trial and appellate court litigation centered on issues relating to the Second Amendment, the Illinois Constitution, zoning challenge standing, and separation of powers between the judiciary and the municipality that approved the zoning ordinance.

Successfully moved to dismiss a defamation claim filed against our clients in the wake of a wrongful death action. We then won summary judgment on a malicious prosecution claim stemming from the same case. This result was affirmed on appeal.

Successfully enforced post-employment restrictive covenants in a declaratory judgment action against employees who left a retail insurance brokerage to open a competing business.

Negotiated a very favorable settlement in litigation filed by a client corporation's former owner under the Illinois Business Corporation Act and arising out of the sale of the business in a merger transaction.

Obtained dismissal with prejudice of a claim against an insurance company for wrongful termination of an insurance agent.

Obtained dismissal with prejudice of a consumer fraud action against an insurance company arising out of the insurance company's settlement of a personal injury claim.

Obtained summary judgment in favor of the defendant in a legal malpractice action which asserted that the client attorney failed to perform due diligence in connection with the purchase of a business, allegedly resulting in substantial transferred liabilities. This result was affirmed on appeal.

Currently defending a wholesale insurance broker against professional malpractice and negligence claims in connection with the placement of a commercial property policy on behalf of a retail broker.

Successfully appealed a \$27 million defamation and FCRA jury award to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and then obtained dismissal of the refiled defamation and privacy claims in state court, which was upheld on appeal to the Illinois Appellate Court.

Secured directed verdicts on behalf of a limited liability company, after a four-day jury trial, on tortious interference, unjust enrichment, and unpaid wage claims against it that totaled \$1.6 million. The client had, through a subsidiary, acquired the business assets of various companies in the restoration services industry. The dispute arose out of the alleged nonpayment of certain "performance payments" allegedly owed to the plaintiffs by a third party to which our client sold its majority interest in the assets. In granting our motion for a directed verdict, the court found that the plaintiffs had not put forth sufficient evidence to support their claims against the client.

Won a dismissal of a defamation case on behalf of a public official.