



John C. Clarke

Partner

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“Clients turn to me when business disputes become strategically important. I help clients navigate complex litigation by combining practical business judgment with thoughtful strategy and persuasive advocacy. Whether resolving a case through negotiation, dispositive motion practice, or trial, I remain focused on achieving efficient, practical results that advance our clients’ business objectives.”

John Clarke represents businesses, financial institutions, closely held companies, executives, and public entities in commercial disputes throughout the Pacific Northwest and Arizona. He advises clients in high-stakes litigation involving corporate governance, shareholder disputes, class actions, financial services, securities, intellectual property, and other business torts in state and federal courts, arbitration, and administrative proceedings.

John works closely with clients to develop litigation strategies that align with their broader business objectives. Whether pursuing an early dismissal, managing complex discovery, preparing key witnesses, or preparing a case for trial, he focuses on positioning each matter for the strongest possible outcome while minimizing unnecessary disruption to the client’s business. Clients frequently rely on John to develop early case strategy, evaluate litigation risk, and guide business-critical disputes from pre-suit negotiations through trial and appeal.

John has represented clients in some of their most significant business disputes, including shareholder and corporate governance disputes, consumer and securities class actions, complex commercial litigation, and regulatory proceedings. He has successfully obtained dismissals of multimillion-dollar claims, prevailed on dispositive motions in state and federal courts, and helped clients resolve business-critical disputes through litigation, arbitration, and negotiated resolution.

John is also deeply committed to public service. As former cochair of Miller Nash’s Pro Bono Committee, he helped lead the firm’s pro bono program to a 32% increase in pro bono hours while expanding opportunities to serve immigrant communities and other underserved Oregonians. He continues to maintain an active pro bono practice and serves on the boards of several nonprofit and civic organizations dedicated to strengthening Oregon’s legal and civic communities.

Education

J.D., University of Oregon
School of Law, 2015
▪ Order of the Coif

B.A., Arizona State
University, *magna cum
laude*, political science,
2011

Bar Admissions

Oregon, 2015
Washington, 2023
Arizona, 2024

Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, District
of Colorado, 2026

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Ninth Circuit, 2016

U.S. District Court, District
of Oregon, 2015

Before joining Miller Nash, John graduated Order of the Coif from the University of Oregon School of Law, where he externed for the Honorable Michael J. McShane of the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon and received the Laird Kirkpatrick Book Prize in Trial Practice, an award given to the top student in trial practice. He also served as a legal writing tutor and mentor in the law school's nationally recognized legal writing program.

Professional Activities

- Multnomah Bar Association, Member
- Oregon State Bar Association, Member
- American Bar Association, Member
- Federal Bar Association, Member
- Armenian Bar Association, Member

Civic Activities

- ACLU of Oregon, Board of Directors, 2026-present
- Leadership Portland, Portland Metro Chamber, Class of 2024
- SOLVE Oregon, Board of Directors, 2023-present
- U.S. District Court of Oregon Historical Society, Board of Directors, 2019-present

Representative Experience

Securities & Corporate Governance Litigation

- Defending one of the Pacific Northwest's largest privately held companies in litigation arising from the termination of its former chief executive officer and involving breach of contract, fraud, restrictive covenants, and related business claims.
- Successfully defended a financial institution against a putative statewide consumer class action alleging breach of contract and violations of Oregon's Unlawful Trade Practices Act, obtaining dismissal at the pleading stage.
- Represented a closely held Oregon company and its owners in a shareholder dispute involving claims of minority oppression, corporate governance, and fiduciary obligations.
- Represented more than 70 investors who collectively lost nearly \$100 million in the Aequis investment fraud, securing favorable settlements through state court litigation and arbitration that exceeded clients' aggregate investment losses.
- Defended owners of a closely held business against claims for fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, and violations of the Oregon Securities Law arising from a corporate ownership dispute.

Class Action Litigation

- Defended a national retailer in multimillion-dollar consumer class action litigation arising from Portland's Clean Energy Surcharge.
- Defended a software company in a putative class action in federal court asserting claims under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act.
- Obtained dismissal of a putative consumer class action against a national trading card retailer alleging violations of Oregon's Unlawful Trade Practices Act.
- Represented a publicly traded corporation in parallel securities class action litigation, shareholder derivative proceedings, and investigations by the Department of Justice and Securities and Exchange Commission arising from allegations of accounting improprieties and insider trading.

Sports, Entertainment & Media

- Represented a Seattle private high school in administrative proceedings concerning conference realignment and athletic association membership.
- Represented the owner of an Oregon professional baseball franchise in litigation involving corporate governance and ownership disputes.
- Successfully defended a national comic book publisher in federal copyright litigation, prevailing on multiple motions to dismiss and obtaining dismissal of the subsequent Ninth Circuit appeal.

Business, Intellectual Property, and Civil Rights Litigation

- Representing a national forest products company in complex environmental and negligence litigation arising from commercial timber operations.
- Defended a financial services organization against claims exceeding \$300 million arising from the collapse of Concordia University Portland, achieving a favorable resolution on the eve of a six-week jury trial.
- Represented Oregon public school districts in complex construction litigation concerning the Oregon Corporate Activity Tax, securing a jury verdict following a five-day trial.
- Defended financial institutions in multiple arbitrations arising from implementation of commercially reasonable security procedures for online banking platforms, including successfully obtaining awards in favor of the institutions.
- Represented private education institution in federal lawsuit alleging claims under Section 1983, prevailing on motion to dismiss.
- Defended a hydroelectric turbine manufacturer in complex federal litigation involving product liability and construction-delay claims, coordinating with engineering and scheduling experts to achieve a favorable resolution.

Pro Bono Service

- Represented multiple pro se litigants in federal civil rights cases through the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon's Pro Bono Panel.
- Represented the Transgender Law Center and other nonprofit organizations in filing an amicus brief before the Oregon Court of Appeals supporting the rights of nonbinary Oregonians.
- Assisted Spanish-speaking client in collecting a \$30,000 judgment through Miller Nash's virtual legal aid clinic.
- Successfully vacated dozens of decades-old criminal convictions imposed on a survivor of human trafficking under New York law.

Publications

- "Controversial Cap on Damages Against Public Entities and Employees Upheld in *Horton v. OHSU*," Miller Nash Graham & Dunn, *From The Ground Up* (June 2016)
- "2015 Broker-Dealer Litigation Survey," American Bar Association, contributor (Mar. 2016)

Recognition & Honors

- Named to Portland Business Journal's 40 Under 40 list, 2024
- Recipient of the Multnomah Bar Association's Pro Bono Award of Merit, 2021
- Recipient of the 2020 Clifford N. Carlsen, Jr. Pro Bono Award
- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (Portland, OR)
 - Commercial Litigation, 2027-present

- Selected for inclusion in *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch*® (Portland, OR)
 - Commercial Litigation, 2021-2025
 - Corporate Governance and Compliance Law, 2021-2025
 - Litigation—Antitrust, 2024-2025
 - Litigation—Banking and Finance, 2024-2025
 - Litigation—Securities, 2021-2025
 - Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions—Plaintiffs, 2022-2025
- Selected for inclusion as an Oregon Super Lawyer—Rising Star, 2020-present

Personal Activities

An Oregon native, John enjoys exploring the Pacific Northwest with his family, landscape photography, training for the New York City marathon, and spending time outdoors.