



John R. Hart

SHAREHOLDER

WEST PALM BEACH

📞 561.650.8024

📠 561.659.7368

CONNECT

✉️ jhart@carltonfields.com

🌐 [LinkedIn](#)

Overview

John Hart is a seasoned litigator and trusted adviser with more than 40 years of experience. Throughout his distinguished career, John has focused on commercial real estate litigation, contract and business disputes, trust and estate matters, commercial leasing, property management, and distressed assets and loan workouts. His ability to navigate complex legal challenges and deliver strategic solutions has made him an indispensable partner for high net worth individuals, entrepreneurs, closely held businesses, and institutional clients alike.

John's extensive litigation background, including having taken dozens of cases to trial all across Florida and mediating countless disputes to favorable pretrial outcomes, gives him a unique perspective in advising clients on when to litigate, when to negotiate, and how to mitigate risks before disputes escalate. This tactical approach allows his clients to focus on their businesses, investments, and personal endeavors, without unnecessary legal distractions.

The hallmark of John's practice is his ability to select and quarterback the right team of professionals, anticipate challenges, and execute sophisticated legal and financial strategies, while serving as a steady, responsive, and trusted adviser. His commitment to practical, results-driven advice makes him an indispensable partner for clients who require the highest level of legal service and business acumen while navigating the complexities of private wealth, institutional growth, business operations, and high-stakes legal affairs.

Born and raised in Miami, John remains active in his local community, serving as the mock trial coach for students at Miami Lakes Middle School and Barbara Goleman Senior High School. Outside the office, John can be found playing amateur jai alai in Miami, where he's been a dedicated supporter of the sport for the past 30 years.

Experience

- *U.S. Bank, N.A. v. Joe James Enters. LLC*, No. 50-2010-CA-007405 (Fla. Cir. Ct. 2014). Represented court-appointed receiver in evidentiary proceedings resulting in a prevailing motion to sell commercial property in Boca Raton over objections of a third party.
- *PNC Bank Nat'l Ass'n v. Hiawassee Woods, LLC*, No. 6:12-cv-01484 (M.D. Fla. 2012). Prosecuted receivership and rent sequestration motions at evidentiary proceedings involving multimillion-dollar shopping center property in Orlando, Florida.
- *PNC Bank vs. Kosovo Realty Corp.*, No. 50-2011-CA-002959 (Fla. Cir. Ct. 2011). Prosecuted a motion for the appointment of a receiver in a four-day evidentiary hearing in a hotly contested matter involving a hotel and restaurant property in South Palm Beach.
- *PNC Bank vs. Ameritrend Commerce Ctr.*, No. 3120 10 CA 01 0806 (Fla. Cir. Ct. 2011). Tried commercial foreclosure action resulting in \$7,619,621 final judgment in favor of client against borrower and guarantors on office complex in Vero Beach, Florida.

- *Esque Real Estate Holdings, Inc. v. C.H. Consulting, Ltd.*, 940 So. 2d 1185 (Fla. 4th DCA 2006). Representation of lender in mortgage foreclosure action that resulted in summary judgment in favor of lender for approximately \$1 million. On appeal, Fourth District Court of Appeal held that trial court did not abuse its discretion in denying motion to vacate foreclosure sale for alleged inadequacy of sale price where mortgagor failed to allege any irregularity or defect connected with the sale process.
- *May v. Barthet*, 886 So. 2d 324 (Fla. 4th DCA 2004). Representation of Mandalay Resorts Group Inc. in legal proceedings under Florida's Vexatious Litigant Law, section 68.093, Florida Statutes (2003), which resulted in barring further frivolous lawsuits against client.
- *Walter T. Embry, Inc. v. LaSalle Nat'l Bank*, 868 So. 2d 661 (Fla. 4th DCA 2004). Interlocutory appeal in mortgage foreclosure action involving gasoline station property. Represented lender in appellate proceedings affirming the entry of a dismissal order. After this decision, prosecuted remainder of action through conclusion of non-jury trial and judgment in favor of client, which judgment was also later affirmed by the Fourth District Court of Appeal.
- *Buckeye Check Cashing, Inc. v. Cardegna*, 824 So. 2d 228 (Fla. 4th DCA 2002). Representation of Buckeye Check Cashing Inc. in defense of class action lawsuit involving allegations of usury and violation of various state statutes. Fourth District Court of Appeal held that federal law controlled enforcement of arbitration agreements at issue, and reversed trial court's order denying the lender's motion to compel arbitration. The Fourth DCA's decision was subsequently reversed by the Florida Supreme Court, but was reinstated by the Florida Supreme Court after the U.S. Supreme Court accepted jurisdiction of the case and issued an opinion affirming the Fourth DCA's 2002 decision.
- *Kirkland v. Miller*, 702 So. 2d 620 (Fla. 4th DCA 1997). Pro bono representation of a borrower, Ruby Kirkland, who was defending an ejectment lawsuit, seeking to evict her from her home of many years, thereby depriving her of her equity in the property. Lender structured the transaction through the use of an Illinois land trust in order to avoid foreclosure upon default. Fourth DCA held that the transaction at issue was not a valid Illinois land trust; it was a mortgage securing indebtedness. The Fourth DCA reversed trial court's order entitling lender to ejectment.
- *New England Mut. Life Ins. Co. v. Podhurst, Orseck, Josefsberg, Eaton, Meadow, Olin & Perwin, P.A.*, 690 So. 2d 1354 (Fla. 3d DCA 1997). Representation of lender, New England Mutual Life Insurance Co., in an appeal involving in excess of \$2 million of insurance proceeds from Hurricane Andrew in connection with two shopping centers in Dade County, Florida. Third DCA held that lender's interest in casualty insurance policy proceeds had priority over law firm's charging lien for services rendered to borrower in obtaining settlement with insurance company.
- *N.Y. Life Ins. & Annuity Corp. v. Hammocks Cmty. Ass'n, Inc.*, 622 So. 2d 1369 (Fla. 3d DCA 1993). Representation of New York Life in a multimillion-dollar foreclosure action, with appellate proceedings involving litigation over lien priority rights between lender and community development association over unpaid property assessments.

- *Johnson v. Bauman*, 549 So. 2d 1185 (Fla. 5th DCA 1989). Defense of appeal by borrower of judgment rendered in favor of lender on promissory note pursuant to verdict after conclusion of three-day jury trial. Also prosecuted cross-appeal, entitling lender to prejudgment interest at the default rate of 18 percent on borrower's promissory note obligation.

Areas of Focus

Practices

- [Creditors' Rights and Bankruptcy](#)
- [Alternative Dispute Resolution and Neutral Services](#)
- [Distressed Asset and Workout](#)
- [Litigation and Trials](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Real Property Litigation](#)
- [Title Insurance](#)

Industries

- [Real Estate](#)

News

06.20.2025

Amy Furness, John Hart Recognized as Power Leaders in Law by South Florida Business Journal

01.31.2022

Carlton Fields Attorneys Recognized as South Florida Business Journal 2022 Power Leaders

01.29.2021

Carlton Fields Attorneys Recognized as South Florida Business Journal 2021 Power Leaders

02.04.2020

Carlton Fields Attorneys Recognized as 2020 Power Leaders

02.01.2019

Carlton Fields Attorneys Recognized As "Power Leaders"

10.08.2018

Carlton Fields Attorneys Interviewed About Win in Show Horse Case

01.09.2018

Aaron C. Dunlap Joins Carlton Fields

08.21.2017

Defendants prevail in “Dirty Stopper” case

08.15.2017

78 Carlton Fields Attorneys Named “Best Lawyers in America”

01.02.2017

Carlton Fields Attorneys Named to the 2017 “South Florida Legal Guide”

01.01.2017

Carlton Fields Names Six New Office Managing Shareholders

Recognition

- AV Rated by Martindale-Hubbell (1997–present)
- "Power Leaders in Law and Accounting," *South Florida Business Journal* (2025)
- Legal Elite Notable Managing Partners, *Florida Trend Magazine* (2024)
- Top Lawyers, *Palm Beach Illustrated* (2024)
- South Florida Power Leaders, *South Florida Business Journal* (2019–2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*, Commercial Litigation (2016–2025)
- Top Lawyers, *South Florida Legal Guide* (2004–2015, 2021–2022)
- Palm Beach County Legal Aid Society Pro Bono Award (2008)
- Palm Beach County Legal Aid Society Real Property Pro Bono Award (1998)

Professional & Community Involvement

- American Bar Association
 - Section of Litigation

- The Florida Bar
 - Real Property, Probate, and Trust Law Section

Speaking Engagements

- “Troubled Assets: Valuation, Legal and Asset Management Issues,” National Council of Real Estate Investment Fiduciaries (NCREIF) Valuation Committee Meeting (2010)
- “Breach of Real Estate Contract Litigation, Case Law Update and Ethical Considerations,” Palm Beach County Bar Association Real Estate Seminar (2009)
- “Florida Foreclosure and Related Bankruptcy and Title Issues,” NBIT Seminars (1999, 2004)

Credentials

Education

- University of Virginia School of Law (J.D., 1986)
- University of Miami (B.A., magna cum laude, 1983)

Bar Admissions

- Florida

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida