



## Jason A. Morris

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## Overview

Jason Morris represents property and casualty insurers in litigation, mediation, and arbitration across the country. He counsels carriers on issues regarding claims practices and procedures, focusing on maximizing his clients' business interests and often helping them avoid litigation in the first place. When litigation becomes necessary, Jason draws on his experience handling bad faith and coverage claims, disputes between insurers, and defending the financial services industry from consumer class actions, primarily in federal court. Jason routinely serves as defense counsel for insureds on behalf of insurers, using his industry knowledge to advance the interests of both carriers and insureds through efficient and timely claims resolution.

Jason is an editor of the firm's *PropertyCasualtyFocus* blog, covering legal developments in the property-casualty industry. In addition, Jason advises insurers with respect to coverage disputes concerning representation and warranty, professional liability, general liability, environmental, contractors, pollution liability, cybersecurity, directors and officers, employment practices liability, aviation, media, fidelity, fiduciary liability, securities, medical liability, trade credit, architects and engineers (A&E), event cancellation, and intellectual property insurance policies. In the RWI context, Jason has experience spearheading efforts to disqualify party-appointed arbitrators as biased against insurers and undermining claimants' overstated damages calculations, which are often based on an enterprise valuation multiple that has no bearing on the merger or acquisition purchase price pre-negotiated by the buyer and seller.

Jason also handles complex civil litigation, class actions, and disputes for clients in the financial services, life insurance, annuity, entertainment, aviation, and real estate industries. His substantial national experience includes matters governed by the laws of California, Illinois, New York, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Florida, Georgia, and more than 20 other states. His matters have covered a variety of substantive areas, such as RICO, ERISA, deceptive trade practices, unfair competition laws (UCL), fraud, financial elder abuse, breach of contract, bad faith, breach of fiduciary duty, and issues arising from market conduct examinations and other regulatory proceedings.

## Experience

### Property and Casualty Insurance

- National claims-handling and bad faith counsel for large specialty lines carrier.
- Represent representation and warranty insurer in two-week arbitration trial in New York.
- *Eckart v. Allstate Northbrook Indem. Co.*, No. 1:22-cv-00281, 2023 WL 2143465 (N.D. Ga. Feb. 17, 2023) (granting client insurer's motion to dismiss and dismissing federal RICO case concerning claims practices with prejudice).
- *3rd Step Recovery Grp., Inc. v. Allied World Ins. Co.*, No. 0:22-cv-62107 (S.D. Fla. 2023) (report and recommendation that insured's case against client insurer regarding insurance dispute over commercial general liability and professional liability policy be dismissed with prejudice).
- *Solomon Senior Living Holdings, LLC v. Nat'l Union Fire Ins. Co. of Pittsburgh*, No. 1:20-cv-02765 (N.D. Ga. 2023) (insurer client's motion for summary judgment granted in dispute over insurance under a directors and officers policy).
- *Lexington Ins. Co. v. Moore Stephens Tiller LLC*, No. 1:16-cv-00114 (N.D. Ga. 2019) (represent insurer against accounting firm in dispute over benefits under a professional liability policy).
- *Patel v. Specialized Loan Servicing LLC*, 183 F. Supp. 3d 1238 (S.D. Fla. 2016) (dismissal with prejudice of lender-placed insurance class action complaint on grounds of filed rate doctrine).
- *Lee v. Ocwen Loan Servicing, LLC*, 101 F. Supp. 3d 1293 (S.D. Fla. 2015) (denying class action settlement objector's demand for discovery concerning settlement payment structure).
- *Hicks v. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.*, No. 8:15-cv-00454, 2015 WL 4474593 (M.D. Fla. July 16, 2015) (securing stay for insurer while order was sought in related class action barring plaintiff from relitigating claims).
- *Montoya v. PNC Bank, N.A.*, No. 1:14-cv-20474, 2016 WL 1529902 (S.D. Fla. Apr. 13, 2015) (approving nationwide class action settlement over settlement class member objections).
- *Meyer v. One West Bank, F.S.B.*, 91 F. Supp. 3d 1177 (C.D. Cal. 2015) (dismissing at pleading stage insurer in lender-placed insurance class action involving RICO and state statutory and common law violations).

- *Perryman v. Litton Loan Servicing, LP*, 81 F. Supp. 3d 893 (N.D. Cal. 2015) (granting motion to stay putative nationwide class action alleging improprieties in the placement of lender-placed insurance).
- *Braynen v. Nationstar Mortg., LLC*, No. 1:14-cv-020726, 2014 WL 6090665 (S.D. Fla. Nov. 10, 2014) (overruling objections to preliminary approval of class action settlement).
- *Kolbe v. BAC Home Loans Servicing, LP*, 738 F.3d 4320 (1st Cir. 2013) (en banc) (affirming district court's dismissal of complaint involving lender-placed insurance).
- *Wahl v. Am. Sec. Ins. Co.*, No. 5:08-cv-00555, 2010 WL 1881126 (N.D. Cal. May 10, 2010), and 2009 WL 1766620 (N.D. Cal. June 18, 2009) (dismissal of all but one claim in putative class action concerning lender-placed insurance).

### Life, Annuity, and Retirement Litigation

- *Allianz Life Ins. Co. of N. Am. v. Crouse*, No. 1:17-cv-04746 (N.D. Ga. 2019) (granting life insurer's motion to dismiss counterclaims).
- *Giorvas v. Grow*, No. 2015-1-CV-285323 (Cal. Super. Ct. Oct. 14, 2016) (jury verdict in favor of insurer after monthlong trial concerning the suitability of fixed deferred annuities).
- *LincolnWay Cmty. Bank v. Allianz Life Ins. Co. of N. Am.*, No. 1:11-cv-05907, 2015 WL 7251931 (N.D. Ill. Nov. 17, 2015) (granting summary judgment for insurer and finding that STOLI policy was void at inception for lack of insurable interest).
- *Blau v. Allianz Life Ins. Co. of N. Am.*, 124 F. Supp. 3d 161 (E.D.N.Y. 2015) (dismissing complaint alleging failure of insurer to comply with statutory notice provisions when life insurance policy lapsed).
- *Logan v. Union Sec. Ins. Co.*, No. 2:14-cv-01174, 2015 WL 3745047 (C.D. Cal. Mar. 31, 2015) (dismissing ERISA section 1132(a)(3) claim and other claims against insurer in putative class action concerning payment of accidental death and dismemberment benefits).
- *Kline v. CUNA Mut. Grp. Lending Sol. Grp., Claims*, No. 10818 of 2005 (Pa. Ct. Com. Pl. Luzerne Cty. 2014) (granting motion for partial summary judgment as to negligence and statutory bad faith claims).
- *Negrete v. Allianz Life Ins. Co. of N. Am.*, Nos. 2:05-cv-06838, 2:05-cv-08908, 2013 WL 6535164 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 9, 2013) (granting key motions in limine in insurer's favor in nationwide annuity sales practices class action).
- *West v. CUNA Mut. Ins. Soc'y*, No. 2:11-cv-01259, 2012 WL 527658 (W.D. Pa. Feb. 16, 2012) (granting motion to dismiss plaintiffs' putative class action claims).
- *Ostrow v. Allianz Life Ins. Co. of N. Am.*, No. 2009 CA 007621 B (D.C. Super. Ct. 2011). (dismissal of representative action alleging consumer protection claims against insurer).
- *Mooney v. Allianz Life Ins. Co. of N. Am.*, No. 0:06-cv-00545, 2010 WL 419962 (D. Minn. Jan. 29, 2010) (defense jury verdict following three-week trial in 350,000-member sales practices class action).

## Aviation

- *Jones v. Alliance Ground Int'l*, No. 1:19-cv-04612 (N.D. Ga. 2020) (obtained summary judgment and fee award against plaintiff).
- *Allianz Global Risks US Ins. Co. v. Great Am. Ins. Co.*, No. 1:17-cv-02291 (N.D. Ga. 2019) (represent insurer in dispute with another insurer regarding proper allocation of benefits).
- *Pope v. Alliance Ground Int'l*, No. 17EV005914H (Ga. State Ct. Fulton Cnty. 2018) (represent airline cargo handling company against alleged premises liability).
- *Coalson v. Art Sign Co.*, No. STSV2018000028 (Ga. State Ct. Dougherty Cnty. 2018) (represent company and individual against alleged wrongful death claim).

## Entertainment and Media

- Represent multiple media companies in defamation suit related to news articles.
- Represent owner of TV channel in suit alleging TV show improperly portrayed plaintiff's property in reality TV show.
- Represented screenwriter in suit alleging defamation in connection with televised documentary.
- Represent celebrity chef in Americans with Disabilities Act suit against chef's restaurant.

## Business Litigation

- Represent national caterer and casual dining chain in multiple commercial dispossessory disputes.
- Represent luxury goods retailer in multiple commercial dispossessory disputes.
- *Collins v. Navicent Health*, No. 5:18-cv-00416 (M.D. Ga. 2020) (obtained summary judgment for employer in discrimination suit).
- *Luster v. Am. Sunshine, LLC*, No. 1:19-cv-03192 (N.D. Ga.) (represent retail seller against TCPA class action).
- *M3 Accounting Servs., Inc. v. Dean*, No. 2:18-cv-00246, 2019 WL 3817464 (N.D. Ga. Aug. 14, 2019) (successfully defeated motions to dismiss in their entirety on behalf of accounting software firm in RICO case for the recovery of millions of dollars).
- *Epstein Becker & Green, P.C. v. ScanTech Holdings, LLC*, No. 2017CV290944 (Ga. Super. Ct. Fulton Cnty. 2019) (granting summary judgment for client in breach of promissory note case).
- *Exec. Comm. of the Baptist Convention of the State of Ga. v. Jackson Hill Baptist Church, Inc.*, No. 17CV8057 (Ga. Super. Ct. DeKalb Cnty.) (represent real estate owners in declaratory judgment action).
- *Tlhapane v. Jackson*, No. 2016CV282414 (Ga. Super. Ct. Fulton Cnty.) (represent law firm against claim of wrongful foreclosure).
- *Waters v. Ariel Belvedere Owner Holdings LLC*, No. 1:17-cv-03648 (N.D. Ga.) (represent owner of shopping center against Americans with Disabilities Act suit).

- *Am. Sec. Ins. Co. v. Cricket Commc'ns*, Civ. A. No. 7410 (Del. Ch. Apr. 30, 2012) (ordering preservation of the parties' status quo business relationship pending outcome of arbitral proceedings).

## Areas of Focus

### Practices

- [Litigation and Trials](#)
- [Cybersecurity and Privacy](#)
- [Representations and Warranty Insurance](#)
- [Class Actions](#)

### Industries

- [Property & Casualty Insurance](#)
- [Life, Annuity, and Retirement Solutions](#)

## Insights

06.15.2018

The Sentinel Strike: The Hartford's Gift to New York Insurers in the War to Stop Policyholder Experts from Claiming Ambiguities Exist in Clear Policy Exclusions

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02.16.2018

Opening the Pandora's Box of Flood Policies, or How Filing Suit Against Flood Insurers Can Effectively Reduce the Suit Limitations Period

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07.14.2017

Washington Federal Court Rejects Policyholder's "Separate Claim" Argument

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05.05.2017

Oregon Supreme Court Revives Century-Old Statute to Award Attorney's Fees to Policyholder

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06.15.2015

\$84 Million Settlement in Northwestern Mutual Annuity Class Case

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12.01.2013

Effective Now: Increased Prohibitions on Unauthorized Possession of Personal Identification Information

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12.01.2013

California Refines Online Privacy Protection Act to Require New Disclosures

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## News

02.12.2019

10 Carlton Fields Attorneys Elected to Shareholder

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## Recognition

- Pro Bono Hero Award (2015) (awarded for obtaining clemency for former inmate serving life sentence for nonviolent drug offense)
- Capital Pro Bono High Honor Roll, D.C. Superior Court (2011)
- Staff, *The Tax Lawyer* (2007–2009)

## Pro Bono

- Obtained retroactive first-time offender status for individual who already paid debt to society and was never told about first-time offender program when originally sentenced.
- Successfully petitioned federal government to release inmate serving life imprisonment who had already served more time than the maximum time he would receive if sentenced today for the same crime.
- *Cobb v. Mason*, No. 2002 DRB 2818 (D.C. Super. Ct. July 21, 2011) (adopting firm's recommendations concerning pro bono client following three-day bench trial).
- *Abell v. Cissel*, No. 09-0900 (Md. Ct. Spec. App. 2010) (judgment in favor of pro bono clients who were victims of mortgage "foreclosure rescue" fraud following three-week trial affirmed).

## Credentials

### Education

- Georgetown University Law Center (J.D., 2009)
- Mercer University (B.B.A, magna cum laude, 2006)

### Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Georgia
- District of Columbia Courts

# Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Georgia
- Virginia