



Harris, Michael F.

Position: Partner

Contact

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Mailing Address

P.O. Box 1060, Buffalo, New York 14201

Location

White Plains, New York

Practice Areas

- [Transportation](#)
- [Retail, Food, Beverage & Hospitality](#)
- [Construction Law](#)
- [Municipal and Government](#)
- [General Litigation](#)
- [Business Law](#)
- [Professional Liability](#)
- [Risk Reduction and Loss Avoidance](#)

Admissions

Connecticut, New York, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York



Biography

Michael focuses his practice on defending significant injury complex personal injury litigation. Michael has broad based experience and is a leader in the firm's general litigation, construction and transportation teams. Michael has successfully litigated catastrophic injury cases to resolution through the use of motion practice, mediation and trial. He aggressively pursues representation of the client's interests with a unique insight into the claims perspective based upon his over ten years of experience in leadership positions with a national and international insurance company. Michael's representation of a major construction company highlights his ability to aggressively defend claims, pursue loss transfer and counsel the client on risk avoidance.

Michael Harris has almost three decades of experience protecting clients in general and commercial litigation, including premises liability, motor vehicle, products liability, municipal liability and construction/labor law cases. Michael is a member of our construction, general liability, municipal liability, professional liability and transportation practice groups. His broadbased experience, coupled with his years spent as a leading in-house attorney at two major insurance carriers, gives him a unique perspective and extraordinary ability to provide counsel and defense for high-exposure personal injury and contract claims.

Throughout his career, he has litigated matters on behalf of national insurers, municipalities, corporations, as well as rental businesses and construction companies. Michael has developed a niche practice focused on the defense of auto rental claims. He regularly handles a wide range of matters for one of the largest car rental companies in the United States, including defending the company aggressively to dismiss liability claims against the corporate entity on the basis of the Graves Amendment. In addition, Michael represents owners, contractors and employers in complex labor law litigation and is well versed on New York's Labor Law and OSHA 10 certified. Further, Michael handles significant trucking litigation and serves as part of a 24-7-365 emergency response team.

Michael understands that representation involves not only defense but counseling clients on risk avoidance, loss transfer and contractual and insurance protection. To this end Michael regularly meets with clients understanding people, culture and the operation and utilizing that information to best represent the client's needs. Michael brings to each matter exceptional insight from the insurance carrier viewpoint, drawing from his experience as a trial/supervising attorney with Kemper Insurance Companies and a metropolitan area managing attorney and Attorney of Record for Royal & SunAlliance Insurance Companies. Michael actively litigates matters from pre-suit investigation up through and including trial. In addition, he is versed in workers' compensation and no-fault litigation. Michael often utilizes alternative dispute resolution and mediations to coordinate effective and cost-efficient defenses of his claims. This experience provides insight to create a defense strategy that recognizes both the carrier and the client's interests.

Michael has represented a number of major contractors and other entities, including Watts Restoration, Inc., G.M. Crisalli & Associates, John Picone, Inc., ELCO and the City of New York. He has litigated cases in all of the downstate New York courts and throughout the Hudson Valley.



During law school, Michael interned for The Consumer Protection Board, and the Federal Highway Administration. He also interned for a U.S. Magistrate and worked in the Disabilities Law Clinic.

When not working, Michael enjoys spending time with his wife and two children.

Education

- Albany Law School of Union University, J.D., 1988
- University of Rochester, B.A., 1985

Honors

- *New York Metro Super Lawyers*, 2020-2023-2025

Professional Leadership

- New York State Bar Association
- Depart of Labor OSHA-10 Construction Training

Representative Matters

Escobar v. GFC

Successfully resolved Labor Law action involving a significant fall from a scaffold resulting in serious injuries through dispositive motion practice and mediation.

Passaro v. Gander Mountain

Obtained a favorable trial verdict on a premises liability action with claimed resulting injuries.

O'Connor v. Amaron

Resolved through mediation an acknowledged liability action for a plaintiff with a 50 plus year life expectancy by means of a structured settlement.

Banker v. City of NY

Obtained a summary judgment dismissal for client in a potential labor law action involving an international contractor.