

PRACTICE AREA

Torts & Insurance

Strategic Tort & Insurance Defense for Carriers, Corporations, and Self-Insured Employers

Friday, Eldredge & Clark's Torts & Insurance Practice provides experienced, results-driven defense for insurers, insureds, and self-insured organizations. Our attorneys handle complex claims, including toxic tort, professional negligence, product liability, premises liability, and environmental litigation. Known for our courtroom skill and strategic approach, we serve as trusted counsel in first-party, third-party, and bad-faith disputes—protecting our clients' interests from investigation through appeal.

We are respected by insurance professionals for our trial and appellate capability on insurance matters, and we also represent insurers in civil lawsuits brought by individual insureds, corporate policyholders, and class action claimants. We have hundreds of jury trials in state and federal courts to our credit, so we fully understand how to present the nuances of your case to a judge and jury.

No matter how specialized your dispute is, we have the experience to handle it.

With a team that includes Fellows in the American College of Trial Lawyers, a past president of the Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel and a number of lawyers recognized for inclusion in *Chambers USA*, *The Best Lawyers in America*, *Mid-South Super Lawyers* and *Benchmark Litigation*. Few firms surpass our ability to evaluate claims and litigation and identify the best strategy for trial or settlement.

Although we excel at trial representation, your company will also benefit from our effectiveness at filing declaratory judgment actions to minimize claims liability and at seeking to resolve claims through arbitration or settlement.

Key Contacts



Donald H. Bacon

OF COUNSEL

📍 LITTLE ROCK

📞 501-370-1539

✉️ bacon@fridayfirm.com



Laura H. Smith

OF COUNSEL

📍 LITTLE ROCK

📞 501-370-1537

✉️ smith@fridayfirm.com

Areas of Focus

Third-party Claims

Our coverage lawyers defend insurers in third-party claims involving virtually every area of insurance and are heard in local, state and national trial courts. In individual and class action or mass tort lawsuits, we offer effective defense against allegations of injury or damage involving product liability, environmental contamination, and toxic torts (including asbestos liability). We also defend insurers in coverage matters related to general premises liability, vehicular accidents, and construction and real estate claims. Finally, we defend against third-party allegations involving business disputes related to professional liability, trade secret disclosure, director and officer liability, product liability, and environmental liability.

SUMMARY

- **Comprehensive Coverage Defense:** Representing insurers and corporate policyholders in first- and third-party claims, bad-faith suits, and coverage disputes.
- **Industry Experience:** Serving clients in energy, healthcare, transportation, chemical, retail, and financial sectors across Arkansas and beyond.
- **Trial-Tested Advocacy:** Hundreds of jury trials in state and federal courts with a proven record of favorable verdicts and resolutions.
- **Risk & Claims Management:** Advising self-insured employers on claims structure, regulatory compliance, and captive insurance formation.
- **Professional Liability Defense:** Protecting healthcare providers, lawyers, realtors, and brokers in malpractice and regulatory matters.

Related Practice Areas

[Commercial Litigation & Regulatory](#)

[Pharmaceutical & Medical Device Litigation](#)

[Product Liability](#)

Insured Representation

Our firm helps corporate, business, and organizational insurance policyholders maximize and effectively manage their insurance coverage as a financial tool. When we represent you as a policyholder, our familiarity with how insurance companies underwrite, reinsure and evaluate risks and claims gives us particular insight into the coverage your policy entitles you to. We represent business policyholders in disputes involving the denial of insurance coverage for environmental liability, asbestos exposure, errors and omissions claims, and similar catastrophic liability issues.

Class Action/Mass Tort Litigation

Since these disputes often involve class action or mass tort litigation, we regularly reconcile your coverage needs with the settlement strategies carriers prefer and are adept at reconciling settlement strategies when multiple carriers are involved. Due to our success in class action litigation defense, particularly in securing denials of class certification, we are highly effective at resolving coverage disputes in these matters.

Risk Management

We also have experience in helping clients manage their own risk. Many employers use self-insurance to finance their group health care and workers' compensation liabilities. Because we work with the plan's various companies, we can advise you on the most effective options and strategies to utilize. If you choose to set up a captive insurance company to secure excess coverage for product liability and other claims, our lawyers will help you create the claims administration structure, secure regulatory approval, and allocate financial resources.

Professional Liability

We understand the stakes in professional liability controversies. Even though much of our work comes to us on referral from malpractice insurance carriers who often remain involved in the case, our number one loyalty is to the health care providers, lawyers, realtors, insurance brokers, and registered representatives who are our clients. If you are a professional service provider who turns to us for help, you will find that our concern is not just for your case but also for protecting your livelihood and reputation. Most professional malpractice actions do not go to trial, but we can walk you through the decision to try to settle using negotiation or alternative dispute resolution. Litigation often involves related actions before professional regulatory bodies, and our lawyers are experienced at proceedings involving the Office of Professional Conduct (lawyers), the State Medical Board (physicians), and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (broker-dealers). If we can resolve the dispute through arbitration, we will craft the settlement that is most advantageous to you. If it is necessary to go to court, we will be vigorous advocates for you at trial and on appeal.

Meet the Team

Donald H. Bacon

James C. Baker

Paul B. Benham III

William Mell Griffin III

Michael McCarty Harrison

Christopher Heller

Martin A. Kasten

Kathy McCarroll

Alexa Mizer

Clifford W. Plunkett

Guy Alton Wade

David D. Wilson

Kimberly D. Young