



Christiane M. McKnight

Partner

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Chris focuses her practice on complex business litigation at the trial and appellate court levels. Licensed in Illinois, New York, Virginia, and Washington D.C., Chris prosecutes and defends against a wide variety of high-stakes contract disputes, trade secret, unfair competition, and fiduciary duty matters throughout the United States. Chris excels at motion practice and appellate briefing, crafting winning strategies, arguments and briefs. She also has significant experience in managing eDiscovery from preservation to production, computer forensic investigations undertaken in trade secret litigation, and related computer forensic analysis protocol negotiations and special master proceedings.

Previously, Chris clerked for the Honorable Eric L. Clay of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. She also practiced for several years as a telecommunications and appellate litigation associate at a well-regarded law firm in Washington, D.C.

Education

- Loyola University Chicago (B.A., *summa cum laude*, 2001)
- Northwestern University School of Law (J.D., *cum laude*, 2006)
 - Law Review, Associate Editor

Bar Admissions

- Illinois
- New York
- District of Columbia
- Virginia
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit

Practices & Industries

- Complex Business Litigation
- Appellate Litigation
- eDiscovery
- Litigation & Dispute Resolution
- Software & Information Technology
- Trade Secret Protection & Enforcement

- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas

Professional Affiliations

- Chicago Bar Association
- Illinois State Bar Association
- DuPage County Bar Association

Community Involvement

- Village of Glen Ellyn Zoning Board of Appeals (*Commissioner, 2022-present*)

Awards & Honors

- Named to the New York Metro Super Lawyers Rising Stars list (2016; 2017)

Experience

- Secured temporary restraining order in multi-million dollar dispute over ownership of medical cannabis business on behalf of investors.
- On behalf of a federal government contractor, secured partial summary judgment, including injunctive relief, and obtained spoliation sanctions against former executive in litigation in D.C. Superior Court arising out of his breaches of non-compete and non-solicitation agreements.
- Successfully defended against motions to dismiss, for summary judgment, and to exclude expert testimony, in litigation filed by a former employee against a federal government contractor in the M.D. Florida; prevailed on post-trial motion to correct or amend the judgment; and defeated motion for attorneys' fees filed by plaintiff's counsel.
- Successfully defended against motions to dismiss and for summary judgment in Massachusetts state court litigation on behalf of a consulting and IT services provider, arising out of a competitor's tortious interference with its consultant and customer relationships.
- Successfully defended against the issuance of a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction against one of the largest U.S. printing and direct mail service providers, in trade secret, breach of fiduciary duty, and tortious interference litigation brought by another large printing company before the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.
- On behalf of a closely-held New Jersey corporation and its Italian majority shareholder, successfully obtained a highly unusual order directing defendants to turn over their personal computers and electronic devices for forensic examination, as well as preliminary injunctive relief prohibiting defendants from utilizing the company's trade secrets and confidential and proprietary information to compete. Subsequently prevailed, following a seven-week bench trial, on claims including theft of trade secrets, conspiracy, tortious interference, breach of fiduciary duty and the duty of loyalty, and aiding and abetting breach; obtained spoliation sanctions, including adverse inferences and attorneys' fees to the client, upon proving that the defendants intentionally spoliated material evidence, as well as attorneys' fees for one defendant's actions in violation of a

court order.

- In one of the first cases filed in the United States under the Federal Defend Trade Secrets Act, obtained broad injunctive relief in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois on behalf of a manufacturer to halt sales of the competitive product and escrow any ill-gotten profits, and ultimately achieved a favorable settlement following court-ordered mediation.
- On behalf of an Italian luxury shoe manufacturer, favorably achieved an early resolution of lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York by its U.S.-based licensor, including licensor's claims to recover royalty payments and other fees purportedly due under the terms of a License Agreement and manufacturer's counterclaims for violation of the New York Franchise Sales Act, among others.
- On behalf of a private equity company, achieved successful pre-suit resolution of claims of breaches of representations and warranties and indemnification under the terms of an agreement governing the sale of one of its portfolio companies, thereby securing the release of funds held in escrow.