



Leonard D. Vines

Of Counsel

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St. Louis - 314.516.2602

A nationally recognized franchising lawyer, Leonard has extensive experience representing national, regional and local franchisors and distributors. He advises clients on alternatives to franchising, structuring franchise and distribution programs, and navigating franchise terminations and transfers. Leonard has assisted start-up and established franchisors, as well as franchisees and franchisee associations.

Leonard also helps clients comply with state and federal laws and regulations, defend state enforcement actions, and resolve franchisor-franchisee disputes, including mediations and alternative dispute resolution matters. Leonard works closely with litigators on trial strategy and alternative dispute resolution and has represented companies and individuals on legal matters such as real estate transactions and mergers and acquisitions of franchise companies. Leonard has extensive experience helping clients resolve their disputes through his unique style of mediation—marrying his deep knowledge of the nuances of franchising businesses gained from his decades-long career representing both franchisors and franchisees, and his commitment to ethics in negotiations and understanding of the importance of strong business relationships.

Leonard also frequently assists lenders who are loaning money to businesses that are acquiring other franchise companies.

A frequent lecturer and writer on franchise topics, Leonard has spoken for groups including the American Bar Association Forum Committee on Franchising and the International Franchise Association and has written for *The Franchise Law Journal* and the *ABA Journal*. He is a certified mediator and former municipal judge and is a member in good standing of the mediation and arbitration panels of [Forum](#).

Leonard has been ranked nationally in franchise law by Chambers USA continuously since 2010, drawing acclaim for his skills as a creative thinker and strong communicator.

Education

- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (B.S., 1969)
- Washington University School of Law (J.D., 1972)

Practices & Industries

- Franchising & Distribution Industry
- Distribution
- Established & Growing Franchisors
- Franchising Regulatory Compliance & Exemptions
- Start-Up Franchisors
- Business Law
- Joint Ventures & Strategic Alliances
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Private Wealth Services
- Private Equity
- Franchising & Distribution

Bar Admissions

- Missouri

Professional Affiliations

- Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis
- International Franchise Association (*Legal Symposium Planning Committee, 2011-2012*)
- American Bar Association Forum Committee on Franchising (*Governing Committee, 2002-2005*)
- North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) (*Franchise Project Group Industry Advisory Committee, 2007-2021; Emeritus Member, 2024 – present*)
- University of Missouri School of Law, Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution (*Certified Mediator*)
- Law Journal Newsletter's "Franchising Business & Law Alert" (*Editorial Board*)

Awards & Honors

- Ranked nationally in Franchising by Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business (2010-2026)
- *1851 Franchise* Top Franchise Lawyers You Should Know (2026)
- Named to *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Franchise Law (1995-2027)
- Named *Best Lawyers*® Franchise Law "Lawyer of the Year" in the St. Louis area (2012-2016; 2025)
- *1851 Franchise* Top Franchise Legal Players (2024; 2025)
- Who's Who Legal: Franchise (2017-2022); USA Thought Leader (2023)
- Lewis G. Rudnick Award, ABA Forum on Franchising (2021)
- *Franchise Times*, Legal Eagles (2011-2020)
- *St. Louis Small Business Monthly*, "100 St. Louisans You Should Know to Succeed in Business" (2015-2016)
- "Drafting and Negotiating Franchise Agreements," Best Program - ABA Forum on Franchising (2015)
- Named to the Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers list, Franchise/Dealership (2005-2014)
- The International Who's Who of Franchise Lawyers
- Who's Who in the Midwest
- Who's Who in American Law
- AV Preeminent®, Martindale-Hubbell® Peer Review Ratings™

Representative Experience

- Represents a Midwestern pizza restaurant franchisor, advising on day-to-day operational matters, negotiations with franchisees, and regulatory issues.
- Assists growing barbeque restaurant franchisor with overall program structure, franchise

agreements, and franchisee defaults.

- Frequently provides franchise-related advice and due diligence to providers of debt and equity investments in national and regional franchise companies.
- Served as lead counsel to an industrial container marketer and distributor in the sale of substantially all its assets.
- Advised a franchisor of insurance agencies on all aspects of its U.S. franchise operations, including negotiating franchise agreements and counseling and negotiating with franchisees.
- Handled the negotiations regarding the acquisition of development rights and corporate matters for a plant-based vegan food franchise.
- Served as an expert witness in arbitration and litigation matters.

News & Media

August 20, 2026

UB Greensfelder Attorneys Recognized in The Best Lawyers in America® 2027 List

June 4, 2026

UB Greensfelder Earns Top Rankings in Chambers USA 2026 Edition

August 21, 2025

UB Greensfelder Attorneys Recognized in The Best Lawyers in America® 2026 List

June 5, 2025

UB Greensfelder Expands Chambers USA Rankings with 13 Practices and 24 Attorneys Recognized in the 2025 Edition

August 15, 2024

UB Greensfelder Attorneys Recognized in The Best Lawyers in America® 2025 List

June 6, 2024

Nine UB Greensfelder Practices and 22 Attorneys Recognized by Chambers USA 2024

April 24, 2024

FTC Issues Rule Prohibiting Non-Competes

August 17, 2023

Best Lawyers 2024 Edition Lists 66 Greensfelder Attorneys, Including Five “Lawyers Of The Year”

June 1, 2023

Greensfelder Practices and Attorneys Earn High Rankings in Chambers USA 2023 Guide

January 26, 2023

Greensfelder Attorneys Named To Who’s Who Legal: Franchising For 2022

August 18, 2022

Best Lawyers 2023 Edition Lists Over 60 Greensfelder Attorneys, Including Five St.

Louis 'Lawyers Of The Year'

June 1, 2022

Greensfelder Practices and Officers Earn Rankings In Chambers USA 2022 Edition

May 23, 2022

Charitable Organization Recognizes Leonard Vines at 2022 Honors Dinner

October 2021

Leonard Vines Awarded The Lewis G. Rudnick Award At ABA Forum On Franchising Meeting

August 19, 2021

Best Lawyers 2022 Edition Lists 60 Greensfelder Attorneys, Including Three St. Louis 'Lawyers Of The Year'

May 20, 2021

Greensfelder Practices and Attorneys Earn High Rankings in Chambers USA 2021 Guide

Publications & Presentations

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-Author, Chapter 2, "Scope and Coverage of the FTC Rule," The FTC Franchise Rule Third Edition (2019)
- "Lenders Beware: Potential Red Flags When Financing Franchises," *ABF Journal* (November/December 2017)
- "Exemptions Under the FTC Franchise Rule," Exemptions and Exclusions under Federal and State Franchise Registration and Disclosure Laws, American Bar Association (2017)
- Co-Editor, Mergers and Acquisitions of Franchise Companies, American Bar Association, Forum on Franchising, 2nd Edition (2014)

PRESENTATIONS

- "You Need to Talk to the Accountants: Financial Statements Requirements and Options for the FDD," ABA Forum on Franchising, Atlanta, Georgia (October 2021)
- "Exemption Based Franchising for Established and Start-Up Franchisors," International Franchise Association Legal Symposium, Washington, D.C. (May 2017)
- "Beware of the 'Inadvertent' Franchise," Meritas Webinar (June 2016)
- "Drafting and Negotiating Challenging Provisions in Franchise and Development Agreements," American Bar Association Forum on Franchising, New Orleans, Louisiana (October 2015)

In the News

- *1851 Franchise*, "2026 Top Franchise Lawyers You Should Know: Leonard Vines — UB

Greensfelder LLP" (June 4, 2026)

- *1851 Franchise*, "2025's Top Franchise Legal Players: Leonard Vines - UB Greensfelder" (October 1, 2025)
- *Restaurant Dive*, "While chains seek multi-unit franchisees, small operators have room to grow in 2023" (January 30, 2023)
- *St. Louis Business Journal*, "Family Business Awards 2019: Imo's Holding Co." (October 25, 2019)