



William H. Forman

Partner

Los Angeles
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Bill is a first-chair trial lawyer in both federal and state courts, proficient in areas as diverse as securities fraud, consumer class actions, and patent litigation. He prides himself on efficiently dispatching matters through aggressive and innovative motion practice. One client said that Bill “is the most exceptional and wickedly smart attorney that I have worked with or against in my 45 years of practice,” and opposing counsel has called him “a bulldog” in the press.

Bill Forman has over 30 years’ experience litigating federal and state cases in Los Angeles and throughout the United States. He counsels and represents clients in a wide range of complex commercial disputes, consumer class actions (including health care), securities fraud matters, and unique and precedent-setting First Amendment cases. He oversees and coordinates litigation for an international organization and in that capacity also provides counseling on corporate, employment, and a variety of U.S. and international regulatory issues. As first-chair trial attorney, Bill has tried cases successfully in both state and federal court in criminal and civil matters. He has argued and won appeals in numerous state and federal appellate courts, and argued successfully before the Federal Multi-District Litigation Panel. He excels at cross-examination of experts; a federal district judge said that Bill’s cross-examination of the opposing party’s expert was “one of the two or three best I have ever seen.”

In addition to his civil work, Bill was a Deputy in the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Central District of California, Capital Habeas Unit, from 1997–2003. He represented persons sentenced to death in California state court and succeeded in overturning death sentences for three of his clients.

Key Matters

Some of the experience represented below may have been handled at a previous firm.

- Won a complete defense verdict at trial against the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in its action against a CEO charged with insider trading and fraudulently reporting revenues.
- Won a unanimous federal jury verdict for client facing US\$30M+ claim in licensing dispute after jury found no damages; the judge trying the case called Bill's examination of plaintiff's damages expert "one of the two or three best cross-examinations I've ever seen."
- Defeated the claims of lead plaintiffs in a putative class action by proving, at a bench trial on mental capacity, plaintiffs with drug addiction had sufficient capacity to enter into arbitration provisions contained in agreements with drug rehabilitation centers.
- Won enforcement of arbitration agreements even though plaintiffs' claims were for torts of alleged stalking and harassment that arose almost 20 years after execution of the agreements.
- Served as trial counsel for a California software company in a patent infringement and trade secrets case in federal court in Texas. Case settled on eve of trial on favorable terms after winning motions he wrote and argued on choice of law and limiting expert testimony on damages.
- Established new precedent by winning motion for attorneys' fees under the Copyright Act for prevailing in case, even though dismissal was for lack of jurisdiction and not on the merits.
- Successfully argued before Multidistrict Litigation Panel against consolidation of dozens of cases brought against Bill's client.
- Represented major entertainment company in matter with hundreds of millions of dollars of claimed damages, which settled on favorable terms after Bill's multi-day examination of plaintiffs' damages expert.
- Obtained a favorable settlement of a wage and hour class action by demonstrating that putative class members were independent contractors.
- Obtained a US\$20M judgment in a federal bench trial on behalf of a major entertainment studio for breach of a licensing agreement.
- Successfully arguing a motion to dismiss on behalf of a mortgage lender and its directors and officers in several nationwide class actions arising from the mortgage crisis (*In re Thornburg Mortgage Inc. Securities Litigation*, No. 07-cv-00815, 2010 BL 18648 (D.N.M. Jan. 27, 2010)).
- Won a reversal for client of trial court's denial of attorney's fee motion on novel issue of law (*One Star, Inc. v. Staar Surgical Co.*, 179 App. 4th 1082 (2009)).

Recognitions

- Special Recognition Award, California Public Defenders Association, 2005. This award was given in recognition of Bill's successful efforts to overturn the life sentence of Thomas Goldstein, who had been wrongfully convicted of murder.

Activities

- Bill is a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for a teen in the foster care system.
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Credentials

EDUCATION

William received his B.A., *summa cum laude*, in History from Princeton University in 1987. He received his J.D., *cum laude*, from Harvard Law School in 1990.

ADMISSIONS

- California

Related Insights & News

Publications

- “Appraising *In the Matter of Deloitte & Touche*: Considering the PCAOB’s Articulation of Its Disciplinary Authority,” *Securities Regulation Law Journal*, 36, No. 2, June 2008
 - “The Future of Loss Causation,” *Securities & Commodities Regulation*, Vol. 20, No.11, November 2004
 - “The Federal Death Penalty Act After *Apprendi*,” *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, Vol. 14, No. 1, July/August 2001
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NEWS

2022 Pro Bono Impact Report

MAY 1, 2023

BLOG

FTC Targets “Influencers in the Wild”

DECEMBER 7, 2021

IN THE MEDIA

Daily Journal Highlights Winston’s Los Angeles Expansion and Post-Pandemic Positioning

MARCH 8, 2021

CLIENT ALERT

California High Court Shuts Down Meal Period Rounding

MARCH 3, 2021

IN THE MEDIA

Featured in the *Daily Journal*: Winston Announces Expansion in Los Angeles

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Winston & Strawn Expands Los Angeles Office with Addition of 18 Attorneys

FEBRUARY 16, 2021

IN THE MEDIA

Winston & Strawn's West Coast Expansion Featured in The American Lawyer

FEBRUARY 16, 2021

Capabilities

Litigation/Trials

Commercial Litigation & Disputes

Securities, M&A & Corporate Governance Litigation

Class Actions & Group Litigation

Labor & Employment

Government Investigations, Enforcement & Compliance

Antitrust/Competition