



## Sharon Desh

Partner

Chicago

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Sharon is a courtroom-proven trial lawyer with extensive experience in high-profile cases involving parallel proceedings in state and federal courts. Known for her ability to collaborate across the aisle in mass tort litigation in particular, she is a frequent writer and speaker on trial strategy alongside industry leaders, and has been named a “Key Lawyer” by The Legal 500 in life science and product liability defense. Sharon also has significant experience working with and examining witnesses, as well as in setting case strategy for joint defense groups in complex matters.

Sharon has represented Fortune 100 companies in class actions, mass torts, and multidistrict litigation (MDL) in the pharmaceutical and consumer product industries. She has been a key member of several trial teams, including representing a major pharmacy chain in the *Opioid* litigation (described by the Washington Post as “the most complex civil lawsuit in U.S. history”) and more recently securing a defense verdict on behalf of a multinational medical device and health care company in the NEC litigation in state court after the Plaintiff requested over US\$6.2B in damages. Sharon previously served as a law clerk to the Honorable Edith Brown Clement of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

# Key Matters

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

- National and trial counsel for a **multinational medical device and health care company** in state and federal proceedings involving numerous product liability lawsuits, alleging that cow milk-based preterm infant formula products cause a naturally occurring gastrointestinal disorder in premature infants. Served on the trial team that secured a full defense verdict in Missouri state court after the Plaintiff requested over US\$6.2B in damages.
- ***In re National Prescription Opiate Litigation MDL*** (U.S. District Court, N.D. Ohio): National and trial counsel for a major pharmacy chain in nationwide state and federal litigation relating to the distribution and sale of prescription opioid medications, including over 2,500 cases brought by states, cities, counties, tribes, and private parties.
- ***In re Domestic Drywall Antitrust Litigation MDL*** (U.S. District Court, E.D. Pa.): Counsel for the leading U.S. drywall manufacturer against Sherman Act and state law price-fixing claims brought by 12 of the nation's largest homebuilders. Secured summary judgment on liability in favor of clients United States Gypsum Company and USG Corp. This decision came after the court denied summary judgment to multiple co-defendants.
- ***Johnson v. Monsanto Co.*** (City and County of San Francisco Super. Ct.): Consulting attorney for first lawsuit to proceed to trial across all state and federal cases alleging that Roundup weedkiller caused plaintiff's non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
- ***E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. v. Unifrax*** (U.S. District Court, D. Del and U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit): Trial counsel to DuPont in successful jury trial relating to DuPont's patent covering thermal acoustic blankets for use in aircraft, which was affirmed on appeal.
- ***Prologis v. IGT*** (U.S. District Court, Nev.): Second-chair trial counsel to IGT in bench trial on multimillion-dollar breach of contract action.

# Recognitions

- *The Legal 500 U.S.*, "Key Lawyer" in the areas of Healthcare: Life Sciences (2023) and Dispute Resolution: Product Liability, Mass Tort And Class Action - Defense: Pharmaceuticals And Medical Devices (2023–2024)
- *Super Lawyers*, "Illinois Rising Star" (2017–2021)

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# Activities

Sharon is a member of the Chicago Litigation subcommittee of Winston & Strawn's Associate Evaluation Committee.

Outside of Winston, Sharon serves on the board of the Chicago chapter of the Federal Bar Association, on the board of the Chicago Fire Department Foundation, and on The Digital Chamber's Decentralization Working Group.

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# Credentials

## EDUCATION

Sharon received her J.D., with honors, from the University of Chicago Law School in 2011. She received her M.A. in philosophy from the University of Maryland in 2008 and her B.A., *cum laude*, and with honors in philosophy from

Vanderbilt University in 2006.

## ADMISSIONS

- Illinois

## CLERKSHIPS

- USCA - Fifth Circuit for the Honorable Edith Brown Clement
- USCA - Fifth Circuit for the Honorable Edith Brown Clement

# Related Insights & News

## Publications

- ["The 'Master of the Complaint': The Supreme Court Gives Plaintiffs a New Avenue to Avoid Federal Court,"](#) Winston & Strawn Product Liability & Mass Torts Digest, Co-author, Feb. 21, 2025
- ["Paltrow Win Offers Lesson In Celebs Staying On Brand At Trial,"](#) Law360, Co-author, June 28, 2023
- ["Alex Jones Cases Show It's Time To Rethink Zealous Advocacy,"](#) Law360, Co-author, Dec. 14, 2022
- ["4 Witness Presentation Lessons from the Depp-Heard Trial,"](#) Law360, Co-author, August 2, 2022. Named in ["Trial Tips: The Top Law360 Guest Articles Of 2022,"](#) Law360, December 23, 2022

## Speaking Engagements

- "Trial and Settlement Timing – Lessons from the Bench and Bar," Panelist, Trial Lawyers of Mass Torts, Feb. 20, 2025
- "Mass Tort Management Tactics: Practical Advice For Product Liability In-House Counsel," Panelist, Winston & Strawn Product & Mass Torts Summit, May 9, 2024
- "The Controversy Surrounding Rule 16.1," Panelist, Mass Torts Puerto Rico, May 2, 2024
- "AI-Powered Legal Practice: Leveraging Technology in Fact Finding and Discovery," Panelist, Legalweek, Jan. 31, 2024
- "Key Developments That Move the Needle," Panelist, 23rd Annual Complex Litigation Symposium, Nov. 10, 2023
- "Ethical Issues in Mass Tort Advertising," Speaker, Federal Bar Association, Chicago Chapter Annual Ethics Program, June 6, 2023
- "Critical Tools for Navigating Mass Torts (Part 1)," Panelist, Mass Torts Puerto Rico, May 4, 2023
- "Lessons Learned from this Year's Top MDLs: Key Defense Strategies from 3M Ear Plugs, Opioids and Zantac MDLs," Panelist, ACI Drug & Medical Device Litigation Conference, December 7, 2022
- "Strategies for Addressing Plaintiff Evolving Tactics in MDLs: Public Nuisance and Beyond," Panelist, Winston & Strawn Product & Mass Torts Summit, June 7, 2022

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## BLOG

The "Master of the Complaint": The Supreme Court Gives Plaintiffs a New Avenue to Avoid Federal Court  
FEBRUARY 21, 2025

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## SEMINAR/CLE

Winston's Product & Mass Torts Summit Series 2024

OCTOBER 23, 2024

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## RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in *The Legal 500 U.S.* 2024

JUNE 12, 2024

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## ARTICLE

Paltrow Win Offers Lesson In Celebs Staying On Brand At Trial

JUNE 28, 2023

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## RECOGNITIONS

Winston & Strawn Recognized in *The Legal 500 U.S.* 2023

JUNE 7, 2023

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## RECOGNITIONS

Sharon Desh and Jacob Seiden's Article Named Among The Top Law360 Guest Articles of 2022

DECEMBER 23, 2022

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## ARTICLE

Alex Jones Cases Show It's Time To Rethink Zealous Advocacy

DECEMBER 15, 2022

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## SPONSORSHIP

Winston Sponsors, Speaks at ACI's 27th Annual Drug & Medical Device Litigation Conference

DECEMBER 6-7, 2022

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## BLOG

Chicago Litigators Spend an Afternoon Giving Back to the Community

OCTOBER 14, 2022

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## ARTICLE

4 Witness Presentation Lessons From The Depp-Heard Trial

AUGUST 2, 2022

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## WEBINAR

Product & Mass Torts Summit 2022

JUNE 7, 2022

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## PRESS RELEASE

Winston & Strawn Continues Expansion of Litigation Practice With Addition of Sharon Desh

FEBRUARY 23, 2022

# Capabilities

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Product Liability & Mass Torts

Commercial Litigation & Disputes

Class Actions & Group Litigation

Litigation/Trials

Medical Devices

Cryptocurrencies, Digital Assets & Blockchain Technology

Health Care