

Jason Banonis

Shareholder

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Jason is a highly accomplished defense attorney with more than 20 years of experience handling complex casualty litigation.

Throughout his career, Jason has defended hundreds of premises liability, sports and entertainment, retail, dram shop, motor vehicle and product liability matters, trying several cases to verdict. Additionally, he has handled several mold exposure claims involving subcontractors, school districts and a regional hospital.

He has also represented Fortune 500 companies and a considerable number of service providers in sports and entertainment, retail, corrections, healthcare, facilities, restaurant and bar industries.

In addition to his seasoned trial advocacy skills, he regularly uses focused discovery and technology to effectively and creatively represent his clients in a cost-efficient manner. He was also involved in the MDL litigation for a distributor of latex products. Jason regularly serves as a court-appointed arbitrator in the Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County, Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County and United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. He also serves as a judge pro tem in the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County. Civil litigants often hire Jason to serve as a private arbitrator in their matters.

Among his numerous professional affiliations, Jason is the Past President and Board Member of the Pennsylvania Defense Institute (PDI), a 400-member organization comprised of lawyers, insurance company executives, self-insurers, and independent adjusters who are focused on promoting the interests of the civil litigation defense bar. In July 2020 he received the PDI's "Defense Attorney of the Year" Award for his statewide efforts in conjunction with the plaintiff's bar to reopen Pennsylvania courts and law offices during the Covid-19 pandemic. He also has received the Defense Research Institute's Exceptional Performance Citation for 2019-2020. He has participated extensively as a

Practices

- General Liability
- Premises & Retail Liability
- Product Liability
- Automobile Liability
- Hospitality & Liquor Liability
- Medical Malpractice
- Trucking & Transportation Liability
- Class Action Litigation

panelist or moderator for various Continuing Legal Education programs. He most recently presented to the Northampton County Bar Association on the topic of Representing Your Client at an Online/Virtual Mediation.

Jason was also an appointed member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Covid-19 Task Force. As one of the civil defense bar representatives, he helped develop processes, technologies and rules recommendations to enable the legal system to continue operations under crisis conditions.

He now serves on the DRI Center for Law and Public Policy task force dedicated to monitoring legislative and rulemaking developments at the state level.

Devoted to community service, Jason is President of Lower Saucon Township Council. His community service on Township Council includes liaison to Landfill, Parks & Recreation, Municipal Police Contract and Active Transportation Committees. He formerly served for ten years as the Chairman of the Lower Saucon Township Zoning Hearing Board, deciding substantive and procedural challenges to the validity of land use ordinances.

Education

- Widener University Delaware Law School (J.D., 1999)
- Bucknell University (B.S.B.A., 1994)

Admissions

- New Jersey, 2000
- Pennsylvania, 2000
- U.S. Court of Appeals 3rd Circuit, 2000
- U.S. District Court District of New Jersey, 2000
- U.S. District Court Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 2000
- U.S. District Court Middle District of Pennsylvania, 2000
- U.S. District Court Western District of Pennsylvania, 2018
- U.S. Supreme Court, 2023

Representative Cases & Matters

- Obtained a unanimous defense verdict in a civil jury trial in Northampton County, Pa. under COVID restrictions. In this premises liability case, the plaintiff claimed he had slipped on snow and ice on a sidewalk and suffered a comminuted tri-malleolar fracture, requiring two surgeries. The demand was \$130K and Jason's best offer was \$75K. At trial, Jason demonstrated that the plaintiff failed to establish that the accident occurred on the property his client maintained as power-of-attorney and that his client breached any limited duty owed to a licensee. The socially-distanced jury returned its verdict in an hour.
- Obtained summary judgment for a hospital operating room management consulting company for premises liability claims resulting in alleged traumatic brain injury where demand was \$1.9 million.
- Obtained defense verdict for a bowling alley for premises liability claims resulting in alleged brachial plexus injury where demand was \$250,000.

- Obtained a summary judgment in a Monroe County apartment complex slip and fall on snow and ice case. The Court determined that the evidence adduced by plaintiff did not meet the requirements for the Hills and Ridges Doctrine (i.e. that snow and ice had accumulated on the ground in ridges or elevations of such size and character as to unreasonably obstruct travel and constitute a danger to pedestrians). The Court also found that there was no proof of a dangerous condition or notice of the condition to establish a breach of duty. The Court did not reach the merits of our assumption of risk arguments.
- Obtained summary judgment for a correctional services food services provider for toxic tort claims of correctional officers alleging exposure to mold in the prison where demand was in excess of \$1 million.
- Successfully and economically resolved a complex premises liability case at an air cargo distribution hub through creative use of meteorology experts and discovery.
- Successfully and economically resolved a complex industrial shelving unit collapse case resulting in catastrophic head injury through creative use of biomechanical and engineering experts.
- Successfully and economically resolved a medical product liability case involving a catheter sheath through effective use of engineering and design experts.
- Successfully and economically resolved a products liability case involving a motorized yard truck through effective use of engineering and human factors experts.
- Obtained summary judgment for a tree removal service based on plaintiff's failure to file action within statute of limitations.
- Obtained defense verdict at trial in a low speed motor vehicle accident through effective use of photographs, damages estimates and medical experts.
- Successfully obtained dismissal of the distributor of an allegedly defective log splitter.
- Successfully defended construction liability case where the demand was \$10 million by showing that the action of my client was not the proximate cause of plaintiff's injuries.

Honors & Awards

- Board of Governors of Bowie State University's Maguire Academy for Risk Management and Insurance (2025)
- Top Lawyers of the Lehigh Valley, Litigation (2025)
- 2020 Pennsylvania Trailblazer, The Legal Intelligencer
- Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) COVID-19 Task Force
- Pennsylvania Defense Institute (PDI), Defense Attorney of the Year, 2020
- Defense Resource Institute - Exceptional Performance Citation 2019-2020
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyer Rising Star (2007-2008)

Associations & Memberships

- American Bar Association
- Claims & Litigation Management Alliance (CLM)
- Defense Research Institute
- Lehigh County Bar Association
- Lower Saucon Township Zoning Hearing Board
- Northampton County Bar Association
- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- Pennsylvania Defense Institute, (PDI) Co-chair of the Governmental Affairs Committee 2021; President 2019; Executive Vice President 2017-2018; Treasurer

2016-2017; Secretary 2015-2016; Board of Directors 2011-Present

- Temple American Inn of Court, 2000-2001
- Lower Saucon Township Council, 2019 to present
- Defense Resource Institute, State Representative for Pennsylvania
- DRI Center for Law and Public Policy, State Legislation and Rules Task Force

Classes & Seminars Taught

- *Project Litigate – Panel Discussion*, 2024 Pennsylvania Defense Institute (PDI) Annual Conference, Bedford Springs, PA, July 12, 2024
- *Civil Litigation State of Affairs, The Impact of COVID-19 in New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Florida & What's Next* – Moderator, Marshall Dennehey Client Webinar, June 2021
- *Civil Litigation Updates in COVID-19 Litigation – Where Do We Stand One Year Later?* Marshall Dennehey Webinar, May 2021
- *How to Represent Your Client in Virtual Mediation*, webinar presented by Northampton County Bar Association, May 21, 2020
- *An Overview of Pennsylvania Law and Effective Litigation Management Strategies*, Marshall Dennehey Client Seminar, June 2015
- *An Overview of Pennsylvania Automobile Liability*, Marshall Dennehey Client Seminar, April 2015
- *Issues and Defenses in Pennsylvania Premises Liability Cases*, American National Red Cross' Dedicated Liability Unit, July 2011
- *Pennsylvania Liability Seminar*, Crawford & Company
- *Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Liability Seminar*, Laidlaw Transit, Inc.
- *Persuasion, Civility and How Jurors Make Decisions*, Panelist and moderator, Pennsylvania Defense Institute North Region Ethics CLE Program
- *Advanced General Liability Seminar*, organizer and moderator, PDI East with federal and state judges

Published Works

- "Social Media: The Discoverable Window to the Trust," LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell, September 21, 2011, and *Defense Digest*, Vol. 17, No. 3, September 2011

Results

Unanimous Defense Verdict in Premises Liability Civil Jury Trial Under COVID Restrictions

We obtained a unanimous defense verdict in a civil jury trial in Northampton County, Pa. under COVID restrictions. In this premises liability case, the plaintiff claimed he had slipped on snow and ice on a sidewalk and suffered a comminuted tri-malleolar fracture, requiring two surgeries. At trial, Jason demonstrated that the plaintiff failed to establish that the accident occurred on the property his client maintained as power-of-attorney, or that his client breached any limited duty owed to a licensee. The socially-distanced jury returned its verdict in favor of the defense in one hour.

