

Melanie J. Foreman

Shareholder

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Philadelphia – 215.575.2694



Melanie is a shareholder in the Casualty Department, where she defends insured and self-insured entities against claims in state and federal court. She focuses her practice on litigation related to product liability, premises and municipal liability, and commercial transportation. Melanie has served as lead trial counsel and as second chair in multiple civil litigations. Melanie is also responsible for taking depositions, making oral arguments before the Court, and drafting pleadings and motions, having successfully obtained final adjudication via the summary judgment phase.

Prior to joining the firm, Melanie served as Law Clerk to the Honorable Annette M. Rizzo in the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, Court of Common Pleas. During her tenure, Melanie drafted judicial opinions and conducted pre-trial conferences by mediating between parties to settle cases and ensure cases were trial-ready.

Melanie is heavily involved in the Philadelphia legal community. She is a Board member of Community Legal Services (CLS), and also co-chairs its Leadership Council and Board Development Committee. Melanie is the Founder and Chair of Justice Rising, a young professionals organization associated with CLS that is dedicated to access to justice for all. She is a member of the Board of Governors of the Philadelphia Bar Association, and also sits on the Large Firm Associates' Committee. She serves as the President of the Temple American Inn of Court.

Melanie also volunteers her time with the women's collective giving organization, Impact100 Philadelphia, and the University of Pennsylvania's Alumni Interview Program, serving as Co-Chair of the Philadelphia region's interviewing of prospective undergraduates.

Melanie is a two-time graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, earning her Bachelor of Arts in 2008 *summa cum laude* and her *juris doctor* in 2013. She is barred in Pennsylvania and New York.

Practices

- Product Liability
- General Liability
- Trucking & Transportation Liability
- Public Entity & Civil Rights Litigation
- Fraud/Special Investigation

Education

- University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School (J.D., 2013)
- University of Pennsylvania (B.A., *summa cum laude*, 2008)

Admissions

- New York, 2014
- Pennsylvania, 2014
- U.S. District Court Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 2016
- U.S. Court of Appeals 3rd Circuit, 2024

Honors & Awards

- The Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch®, Product Liability Litigation - Defendants; Transportation Law (2021-2025)
- Craig M. Perry Service Award, Philadelphia Bar Association (2019)
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyers Rising Star (2023-2024)
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyers (2026)

Associations & Memberships

- Community Legal Services, Board Member; Co-Chair, Leadership Council; Co-Chair, Board Development Committee
- Disciplinary Board of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Hearing Committee Member
- Impact100 Philadelphia, Young Philanthropist
- Justice Rising Advocates, Community Legal Services, Founding Chair, 2017
- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- Philadelphia Bar Association, Assistant Secretary; Board of Governors, 2020-2023; Co-Chair, Annual Bench Bar Conference, 2023
- Philadelphia Legal Assistance, Board Member
- Philadelphia Legal Assistance, Co-Host, 25th Anniversary Jubilee for Justice
- Temple American Inn of Court, Vice President, 2022-2023; Treasurer, 2021-2022; President, 2023-2024
- University of Pennsylvania Alumni Interviewing Co-Chair, Philadelphia Region

Published Works

- "Do a World of Good." *The Philadelphia Lawyer*, special pro bono issue, May 2024
- "Conflicting Opinions on Personal Injury Jurisdiction Over Foreign Corporations Linger in Pa.," *The Legal Intelligencer*, Personal Injury Supplement, November 2020
- "The Fight to Stop Predatory Lending in Pennsylvania." co-author, *The Legal Intelligencer*, October 24, 2019
- "Endless Statute of Limitations For Uninsured Motorist Claims In Pennsylvania?," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March 2018
- "Young Professionals and Community Legal Services Partner Up," co-author, *The Legal Intelligencer*, January 24, 2017
- "When Targeted Killing Is Not Permissible: An Evaluation of Targeted Killing Under the Laws of War and Morality," *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law*, January 2013

Classes/Seminars Taught

- *Negligence 101 - A Pennsylvania and Florida Legal Overview*, Marshall Dennehey Client Presentation, December 15, 2020

Pro Bono Activities

- Community Legal Services Leadership Council
- Justice Rising, Founder and Chair, Philadelphia, PA

Significant Representative Matters

- Successfully obtained a defense verdict for a public transportation system in a Wrongful Death and Survival case in the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas. The case involved the death of a pedestrian, struck by a bus, with the plaintiff, his father, disputing the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's suicide ruling. The defense presented a forensic psychiatrist's testimony confirming the deceased's high suicide risk. Although the transportation system was found 40% negligent, the decedent's 60% negligence barred recovery of damages. The claim was further limited by statutory caps applicable to Commonwealth entities.
- Successfully obtained summary judgment in an alleged sex abuse case pending in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. The plaintiff, a minor, alleged that he was abused by an unidentified assailant while at a summer camp in 2002. In granting the motion and dismissing the lawsuit, the judge himself noted that it is rare for the court to enter summary judgment in cases of this nature.

Results

Successfully Defended SEPTA in a Wrongful Death and Survival Case

We successfully defended the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) in a wrongful death and survival case in the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas. The case involved the death of a pedestrian, Vincent Boykin, struck by a SEPTA bus, with the plaintiff, his father, disputing the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's suicide ruling. The defense presented a forensic psychiatrist's testimony confirming Mr. Boykin's high suicide risk. Although SEPTA was found 40% negligent, the decedent's 60% negligence barred recovery of damages.

Defense Verdict for Public Transportation System in Philadelphia's Court of Common Pleas

We obtained a defense verdict on behalf of a public transportation system in a Wrongful Death and Survival case in the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas. The case involved the death of a pedestrian, struck by a bus, with the plaintiff, his father, disputing the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's suicide ruling. The defense presented a forensic psychiatrist's testimony confirming the deceased's high suicide risk. Although the

transportation system was found 40% negligent, the decedent's 60% negligence barred recovery of damages. The claim was further limited by statutory caps applicable to Commonwealth entities.

Plaintiffs' Class Action Certification Attempts Thwarted

We received a favorable decision from the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas Commerce Program. Our motion to strike the plaintiffs' class action certification was granted, effectively dismissing the plaintiffs' attempts at a class action lawsuit against a transportation authority.