

Lela N. Eke

Associate

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Lela is a member of the Workers' Compensation Department, where she represents insured entities in New Jersey workers' compensation matters. Lela is admitted to practice law in New Jersey and Washington, DC.

Prior to joining Marshall Dennehey, Lela clerked for the Honorable Darlene M. Soltys and the Honorable Rupa Ranga of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. She also represented clients in family, immigration, and probate matters at the DC Affordable Law Firm, a non-profit organization providing accessible legal assistance.

Lela received her J.D. in 2019 and her LL.M in Civil Justice in 2021 from Georgetown University Law Center. During her time at Georgetown, Lela completed an Affordable Law Fellowship and was recognized as a Special Pro Bono Pledge Honoree for providing over 100 hours of pro bono services. She also served as an Opportunity Scholar, studied abroad at the National University of Singapore, served on the executive board for the Black Law Students Association, and competed internationally as a member of Georgetown's Alternative Dispute Resolution Team. Prior to law school, Lela graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychological & Brain Sciences and a minor in Religion & Politics

Education

- Georgetown University Law Center (LL.M., 2021)
 - Civil Justice
- Georgetown University Law Center (J.D., 2019)
- Washington University in St. Louise (B.A., 2016)

Admissions

- New Jersey, 2021

Practices

- Workers' Compensation Defense

- District of Columbia, 2019

Associations & Memberships

- D.C. Bar Association
- New Jersey Bar Association

CLASSES/SEMINARS TAUGHT

- *The Intersection of Implicit Bias and Microaggressions in the Legal Workplace and Workers' Compensation*, New Jersey Workers' Compensation May Day Seminar, May 1, 2024

Language

- Spanish (conversational)

Results

Victory Obtained in Catastrophic Injury Workers' Compensation Matter

We secured a significant victory in a catastrophic injury workers' compensation matter involving an above-knee amputation and approximately \$2 million in past medical bills. After more than a year of litigation, the claimant sought an order requiring payment of medical expenses for which certain providers had intervened and were pursuing their own claims through separate counsel. We argued that the intervenors' bills were not properly before the court and should not be included in the order. The court agreed and, as a result, the claimant's counsel was not entitled to a potential 25% fee on the approximately \$2 million in intervenors' medical bills, preserving up to approximately \$500,000 in potential savings. The ruling also preserved the client's ability to negotiate the outstanding medical bills rather than requiring their immediate payment.

Dismissals on the Rise! Our New Jersey Workers' Compensation attorneys are successful in precluding litigation

Lela Eke received a Dismiss Without Prejudice for Lack of Prosecution, after filing a Motion to Dismiss in response to numerous discovery requests that remained unanswered. At the hearing, Petitioner's counsel was unable to provide an explanation for the delay. We argued that keeping the case open to give them more time to respond to our discovery and Motion would be prejudicial against us, and the Court granted our Motion.

Jessica Gordon received a dismissal for lack of prosecution in a case where the claim was denied with ongoing request for medical treatment, but there had been no report from the Petitioner to support the request and no demand was made in lieu of litigation.

William Murphy successfully obtained an order for dismissal for a claim involving a workplace assault. In the case, the Petitioner alleged injuries to their neck, back, chest, and right hand following an assault at work. After the Petitioner missed multiple

independent medical exams scheduled by the employer, we filed a motion to dismiss this claim for lack of prosecution. The judge of compensation granted the motion.

Rachel Ramsay-Lowe was successful in defending a case where the Petitioner was not complying with discovery requests and did not appear for Respondent's permanency evaluation. We filed a Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Prosecution and the Court entered the dismissal Order.

Kristy Salvitti was successful in obtaining an Order for Dismissal where the Petitioner had filed a Reopener of a Clam Petition relative to a prior permanency award arguing that disability to his right shoulder, thoracic and lumbar spine had increased to permanent and total disability. If successful, Petitioner would receive lifetime related medical treatment and 450 weeks to life of his temporary total disability rate. However, following oral argument that Petitioner failed to timely prosecute the claim, the Reopener Petitioner was dismissed.

Thought Leadership

March 1, 2023

When Favors Feel Like Obligations: A Closer Look at the Special-Mission Exemption to the Going-and-Coming Rule