

Melissa Devich Cochran

Shareholder

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Melissa Cochran focuses her practice on product liability, particularly asbestos litigation, where she represents and defends numerous and varied equipment manufacturers, outside contractors and supplier companies. Melissa's day-to-day asbestos practice includes overseeing and directly participating in all phases of litigation, from investigation to trial, throughout Western Pennsylvania. She also frequently participates in discovery in Eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and Madison County, Illinois. In addition, Melissa serves as assistant national counsel for two manufacturing defendants, where her duties include coordination of discovery responses and communication with local trial counsel. Melissa's concentration on her asbestos practice enables her to provide clients with attentive, insightful and cost-effective strategies to combat the ever-evolving challenges of this fast-paced litigation.

As an experienced property and casualty attorney, Melissa represents clients in magistrate and arbitration level trials involving automobile accidents, premises liability claims and product liability suits. She is also actively involved in the investigation, discovery and pre-trial phases of complex multi-vehicle accidents, dram-shop and bad faith cases.

In 2000 Melissa graduated from Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania where she earned her B.A. in English and political science. While attending Saint Vincent, she founded the Saint Vincent College Mock Trial Team and served as its captain. In 2003, Melissa earned her *juris doctor* from Duquesne University School of Law in Pittsburgh, where she was a member of the Trial Moot Court Honor Society. Melissa competed on the law school's Trial Moot Court team in 2002, when her team placed in the finals at the regional tournament, and in 2003, when her team placed in the semi-finals at the regional tournament.

Education

Practices

- Asbestos & Mass Tort Litigation
- Product Liability
- Appellate Advocacy & Post-Trial Practice

- Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University (J.D., 2003)
- Saint Vincent College (B.A., 2000)

Admissions

- Pennsylvania, 2003
- U.S. District Court Western District of Pennsylvania, 2004

Honors & Awards

- Best Lawyers in America®, Commercial Litigation; Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions - Defendants; Product Liability Litigation - Defendants (2020-2027)
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyer Rising Star (2012-2013)

Associations & Memberships

- Pennsylvania Bar Association

Classes/Seminars Taught

- *Causation Decisions Around the Country*, Defense Research Institute (DRI) - Asbestos Medicine Conference - November 2017
- *Defending Damages*, Panel Moderator, Defense Research Institute (DRI) Asbestos Medicine conference, November 5, 2015
- *The Fair Share Act, Transparency, and the Effect of Bankruptcy Claims on Pending Civil Litigation*, National Business Institute CLE Seminar on Asbestos Litigation, August 12, 2014

Published Works

- "PA Superior Court Permits Incomplete Deposition Testimony and Affidavit of 'Unavailable Witness' to Oppose Summary Judgment in Asbestos Claim," - Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC - Client Alert October 31, 2019 - cross published on LinkedIn
- "Pennsylvania Superior Court Questions Voir dire Procedure in Recent Opinion" - Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC - Client Alert May 22, 2018 - cross published on LinkedIn
- "PA Superior Court Answers Question of Whether Fair Share Act Applies to Strict Liability Asbestos Claims" - Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC - Client Alert - January 9, 2018 - crossed published on LinkedIn
- "Eastern District Court of Pennsylvania Predicts Applicability of the "Bare Metal" Defense in Pennsylvania Asbestos Litigation," *Defense Digest*, Vol. 22, No. 3, September 2016
- "Ford Motor Company Obtains Defense Verdict in Allegheny County Mesothelioma Case," *Legal Updates for Toxic Torts Litigation*, December 2, 2016

Thought Leadership

June 30, 2026

Forum Non Conveniens: It Really Has Little To Do With Convenience

